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Wednesday, 29 October 2008, 3 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Zhang Yesui	(China)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Lammens
	Burkina Faso	Mr. Zongo
	Costa Rica	Mr. Weisleder
	Croatia	Ms. Kožar
	France	Ms. Giuliani
	Indonesia	Mr. Natalegawa
	Italy	Mr. Riccardo
	Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Mr. Dabbashi
	Panama	Mr. Suescum
	Russian Federation	Mr. Zheglov
	South Africa	Mr. Crowley
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Saltonstall
	United States of America	Ms. Lavin
	Viet Nam	Mr. Bui The Giang

Agenda

Women and peace and security

Report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security (S/2008/622)

Letter dated 15 October 2008 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2008/655)

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08-57549 (E)

The meeting resumed at 3.05 p.m.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Denmark and Tonga, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, the representatives of the aforementioned countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter dated 29 October 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Burkina Faso, in which he requests that Mrs. Lila Ratsifandrihamanana, Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations, be invited to participate in the consideration of the item in accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mrs. Ratsifandrihamanana.

It is so decided.

I invite Mrs. Ratsifandrihamanana to take the seat reserved for her at the side of the Council Chamber.

I wish to remind all speakers, as I indicated this morning, to limit their statements to no more than five minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate the text in writing and to deliver a condensed version when speaking in the Chamber.

I now give the floor to the representative of Australia.

Mr. Hill (Australia): Australia welcomes the Secretary-General's report on women and peace and security. We appreciate this debate and also the briefings that were given this morning. The report has particular poignancy, given the adoption earlier this year of resolution 1820 (2008), which recognized the security dimension of sexual violence when such violence is used as a tactic of war. I reaffirm our strong support for resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008).

The Secretary-General's report (S/2008/622) makes for sobering reading. That millions of women and children continue to account for the majority of casualties in hostilities, that the targeted use of sexual violence is increasingly used as a potent weapon of war and acts as a destabilizing factor in conflict and post-conflict societies, and that impunity remains for perpetrators of sexual and gender-based violence are facts of which we, as the global community, should be ashamed.

The report does, however, provide some encouragement. Following the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) in 2000, a culture of gender equality and women's empowerment in peace and security areas is slowly taking hold. Australia welcomes the leadership role that the United Nations and other entities have taken in strengthening internal strategies and guidelines.

We particularly acknowledge the work of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) in that area. Australia fully supports their efforts, and we recently committed additional support to assist with the DPA's engagement with African regional organizations on conflict prevention.

Australia is also working in the Pacific region with the Pacific Islands Forum secretariat and the United Nations Development Programme Pacific Centre to strengthen the work of regional organizations on crisis prevention and recovery, conflict analysis, strengthening regional security, mainstreaming gender considerations and implementing violence-reduction policies and interventions. Australia also values and supports efforts by regional organizations such as femLINKpacific.

The Secretary-General's report highlights the ongoing and egregious incidences of sexual and gender-based violence. Australia welcomes the measures that some Member States have taken to prevent and respond to such violence. Gender training for security forces and judicial officials, developing meaningful measures to protect and rehabilitate

survivors, increasing public awareness about sexual violence and removing its stigma are key elements in tackling that scourge, but perhaps most crucial is the need to end impunity for its perpetrators. As a global community, we cannot continue to allow the perpetrators of such violence to go unpunished. Neither can we continue to allow victims to be the subject of court systems that do not take account of their needs, nor can we condone situations in which the systematic intimidation of survivors and reprisals by perpetrators are condoned. We also strongly support the Secretary-General's zero-tolerance policy.

As you requested, Mr. President, we have summarized our distributed statement and direct the attention of members to additional matters addressed in it, particularly the mainstreaming of gender perspectives in all negotiations. One half of the population simply cannot be excluded from peace processes and nation-building in post-conflict societies. We call on the United Nations system, Member States, regional bodies and civil society to enhance efforts to mainstream gender perspectives at all levels of peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now call on the representative of Ghana.

Mr. Christian (Ghana): I would like to commend China for organizing this open debate on women and peace and security. We thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2008/622). We are also grateful to the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and to the other officials who addressed the Council this morning.

Women and girls who have played little or no part in creating armed conflict continue to be victims of grave forms of sexual violence and assault and to suffer the worst forms of hardships and displacement during warfare. Notwithstanding those abuses, women contribute meaningfully to efforts aimed at mediation, reconciliation, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and the rebuilding of national institutions. We recognize that some commendable efforts have been made on policy, norm setting and reforms, and institutional development. But we still have not arrived at a situation in which the equality and empowerment of women can be ensured.

One of the crucial objectives of resolution 1325 (2000) is gender mainstreaming in all aspects of peace and security. Its realization calls for deliberate, purposeful and sustained interventions, especially on the part of Member States, with the active collaboration and support of the United Nations and other relevant actors.

In order to develop long-term strategies to increase women's participation, we should focus considerable attention on the following fundamental issues.

Member States and the United Nations have to include targeted gender-related activities in strategies and programmes on peace and security by, for example, increasing the number of women considered for United Nations peacekeeping operations. It is indeed beyond doubt that the deployment of female military and police personnel facilitates outreach to women in local communities.

Ghana participates in nine United Nations peacekeeping operations and currently is the highest contributor of women to military peacekeeping operations, contributing approximately 12 per cent of the total number of female military personnel. We believe in the beneficial effect of women peacekeepers in post-conflict countries and will therefore strive to deploy more women police and military personnel. In order to ensure that peacekeepers are better informed and resourced to address gender-specific challenges facing women in the post-conflict period, our national strategy also underlines the importance of pre-deployment training on gender for peacekeepers.

Linkages should be established between the activities carried out by the United Nations system and the efforts of Member States to implement resolution 1325 (2000), particularly in conflict and post-conflict situations. We must also ensure the creation of effective institutional arrangements that will not only guarantee the protection of women and girls, but also enhance their full and equal participation in peace processes, including negotiations and decision-making.

Civil society ought to be mobilized and actively involved in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), because its members have important roles to play as advocates, activists and programme implementers in building the political will necessary to bring about real change. Effective monitoring and accountability mechanisms should be engaged to ensure the sustainability of positive changes in the situation and role of women in conflict and post-conflict countries.

The critical role of Member States in the full and effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) cannot be overstated, as national ownership is a prerequisite for the success of gender mainstreaming activities over the longer term. National ownership also enhances prospects for mobilizing the support of civil society groups while enhancing the impact of international assistance. We must take responsibility for that resolution and all that it asks of us. It is easy to request the United Nations to act, but as Member States, we should also acknowledge what is required of us to ensure the effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now call on the representative of Austria.

Mr. Ebner (Austria): Austria associates itself with the statement made earlier by the representative of France on behalf of the European Union (EU) and welcomes the focus of this open debate on the participation of women.

The inclusion of women in peace processes not only ensures that their concerns are addressed in peace negotiations, but also strengthens their position in the subsequent post-conflict phase. Women are thus in a stronger position in national post-conflict recovery efforts. Figures on women's participation in peace negotiations in recent years, however, show that we must significantly increase our efforts.

In light of the recommendations made by the Women's Empowerment Network last year, we are encouraged by the Secretary-General's increasing appointments of women as special representatives and to leading positions in the Secretariat. We hope to see more female appointments in the near future. At the same time, Austria would like to urge special representatives and envoys to make full use of the potential of women in peace processes and conflict resolution.

We strongly encourage United Nations special envoys and special representatives, as well as Security Council missions, in their contacts with local authorities, to stress the importance of gender mainstreaming and to lobby for the active involvement of local women in peace and reconciliation processes.

We further encourage peacekeeping operations to hold regular meetings with women representatives to assess specific issues related to their situation. A gender checklist for EU peacekeeping operations, initiated during the Austrian Presidency of the EU in 2006, has successfully integrated the main objectives of resolution 1325 (2000) into a coherent planning framework. Many elements of the EU gender checklist can serve as a model for peace missions in the framework of the United Nations and regional organizations.

It is also widely recognized that female staff play a distinctive role and have a positive operational impact in peacekeeping operations. That is true for all aspects of the mandate of peace operations, but in particular for sensitive tasks such as in the aftermath of sexual violence or when it comes to screening of women ex-combatants. Additional efforts are needed to attract more women to peacekeeping operations, since, according to a report of the Secretary-General of July 2008, only 2.2 per cent of military personnel and 7.6 per cent of civilian police are female.

Austria is committed to the objectives of resolution 1325 (2000). Our activities are firmly based on a national action plan adopted in August 2007. In line with the Austrian national action plan, a first progress report, which was adopted recently, highlighted concrete achievements during the first year with regard to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) at the national, regional and international levels. That ongoing process of monitoring and evaluation contributes to strengthening cross-departmental cooperation.

One important aspect is training. In 2008, predeployment training on human rights, with a particular focus on the objectives of resolution 1325 (2000), has been undertaken for all for Austrian male and female soldiers participating in the EU's military operation in the Republic of Chad. This month, the Austrian Study Center for Peace and Conflict Resolution held its first specialization course on women and armed conflict, which brought together experts involved in, or preparing for, various United Nations and regional peacebuilding efforts.

The tenth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) should be used to define future priorities. On several occasions over the past year, and most recently in her statement during the general debate of the General Assembly, Austrian Foreign Minister Ursula Plassnik proposed a 10-year review by the United Nations of resolution 1325 (2000), culminating in a review

conference in 2010. Her initiative has already received broad support, in particular from women leaders, who, following a meeting in Brussels hosted by Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner in March 2008, invited Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to convene a ministerial-level meeting in 2010 to review the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and to reinvigorate the commitment to tackling outstanding issues. Austria stands ready to work with the Secretary-General and all interested countries and stakeholders to use the tenth anniversary to identify gaps and challenges and to reinforce the commitment of all States, the entire United Nations system and regional organizations to effectively implement the undertakings of resolution 1325 (2005).

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Japan.

Mr. Takasu (Japan): I would like to express my appreciation to the delegation of China for organizing this important debate on women, peace and security. I would also like to thank the guest speakers for sharing their experiences this morning.

Women can, and should, play a more important role in the process of conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. Women are major stakeholders in each of those stages. Women, together with children, are most vulnerable and often severely affected in conflict and instability. Their different perspectives from those of men and their special needs must be better reflected in efforts to achieve durable peace and reconciliation and to rebuild society.

Since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), the Security Council has repeatedly stressed the importance of women's equal and full participation in efforts to promote peace. Yet, women have often been excluded from the peace process owing to the lack of political will on the part of society and traditional stereotypes with regard to gender roles. All too often, gender-based violence and discrimination against women and girls in the course of conflict hinder their formal representation in peace talks and in the rebuilding of society. The challenge, therefore, is how to utilize the political framework set out in resolution 1325 (2000) to achieve tangible progress in women's lives on the ground. The report (S/2008/622) of the Secretary-General provides us with an overview of the progress made, good practices and existing challenges.

First of all, as a sponsor, we welcome the adoption of resolution 1820 (2008) in June of this year. The resolution recognized sexual violence as a security problem and called on the international community to take concrete steps to tackle widespread sexual violence against women in situations of armed conflict. Ending impunity and providing survivors with the necessary legal protection and remedies will promote the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). We hope that the Secretary-General's campaign to end violence against women and the inter-agency action against sexual violence in conflict situations will strengthen actions by the United Nations system.

Secondly, we are pleased that women are now more represented in peacekeeping operations, with full-time gender advisers and focal points. That facilitates the integration of the gender perspective in national institutions and governance, the participation of local women and girls in national decision-making processes and elections, improved reporting of violence against women and victims' access to services such as medical and psychological care. We hope that the Secretary-General will make further efforts to appoint more women as special representatives and special envoys. Ensuring gender-awareness training for peacekeepers continues to be important in efforts to make the policy of zero-tolerance effective.

Although we are encouraged by some of the positive developments, we cannot fail to note that much remains to be done. To effectively address the needs of women and girls affected by the pressure of conflict, we have to adopt a comprehensive approach to the problem. More effective actions must be taken to protect them from threats to their safety; but, equally, stronger measures to empower them are essential in order to address their needs. Security and judicial sector reform and the rule of law are important, of course. But they should be accompanied by basic social and economic services — such as education, training, microcredit and access to land and property rights — to strengthen the economic capacity of women. What is needed is the human security approach that we have promoted over the years, the essence of which is both to protect people's lives and dignity from serious threats and to empower them to realize their full potential.

Women should be viewed as being more than just survivors of conflicts. They can take on the principal role in fostering reconciliation and peacebuilding

processes. We have provided support through the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security to a number of countries, including Somalia and Afghanistan, in efforts to involve women in reconciliation and creating durable peace. For instance, in Burundi, Japan has been supporting a project through the Fund aimed at strengthening the economic capacity of returnees, displaced women and those in local communities by jointly organizing economic activities for reconciliation and the coexistence of women of different ethnic groups.

Such examples offer inspirations to those women who are struggling for survival every day. I am sure that there are many more, similar examples of success throughout the world. I would like to suggest that the Secretariat compile a list of good practices with regard to women's participation in reconciliation and peacebuilding processes and consider preparing a handbook to be used in a training programme for peacekeepers and peacebuilding experts. It would also be useful to practitioners on the ground.

In conclusion, Japan very much hopes that today's debate will contribute to deepening understanding of this important and crucial issue and to reaffirming our commitment to the objectives of resolution 1325 (2000).

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Mexico.

Mr. Heller (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Mexico would like to express its gratitude to you, Mr. President, for the holding of what is now a traditional open debate on women and peace and security. We also wish to thank the Secretary-General for introducing his recent report (S/2008/622).

Gender equality and the prevention, punishment and eradication of violence against women and girls are State policy in Mexico. They also constitute essential elements of my country's foreign policy in the promotion of international peace and security. The Secretary-General's report reflects the increasing significance of the topic and stresses the need for progress in improving the protection of the human rights of women.

It is clear that there has been some progress since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). However, we must once again admit that there is a gap between the normative frameworks arising from the adoption of the resolution and its effective implementation, as the Secretary-General clearly notes. Mexico therefore welcomes the package of measures that the Secretary-General suggests in order to accelerate the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), particularly in ensuring that women's needs and concerns are included in the development of conflict prevention strategies and early warning measures.

Women are not passive actors in complex situations or emergencies and are especially vulnerable to marginalization and poverty and their associated psychological and physical violence. In that context, Mexico welcomes the Secretary-General's proposal to strengthen the capacity of the Security Council to eradicate sexual violence by dispatching missions to assess situations in which sexual violence has taken place or its use is encouraged as a tactic of war or as part of a widespread or systematic campaign against civilians. We would also deem it appropriate for the Council to consider implementing the recommendation to intensify measures to prevent and eradicate sexual violence, including through more systematic operational and tactical responses by United Nations peacekeeping operations and humanitarian assistance programmes.

We agree with the Secretary-General's proposal that the Council should reiterate that parties to armed conflict have a responsibility to protect women and to prevent and eradicate sexual violence. We reiterate the need to sensitize and train the military personnel of Member States and United Nations peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance personnel on the importance of human rights with a gender component.

Mexico would like to express its concern at the increasing number of cases of sexual abuse perpetrated against women during armed conflict, including during the peacebuilding phase. We agree with the Secretary-General on the fact that sexual violence is a security problem requiring a systematic response commensurate with its scale and magnitude.

It is imperative to take effective measures to prevent and respond to widespread or systematic acts of sexual violence in order to contribute to international peace and security, as well as to intensify efforts to implement a zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse in United Nations peacekeeping operations, pursuant to resolution 1820 (2008).

The adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) was the result of the political will of Council members to provide protection for the millions of women affected by armed conflicts. A permanent and strong willingness to translate that commitment into concrete action is required.

In that regard, Mexico supports the Secretary-General's position on the issue of the Security Council increasing its use of the Arria Formula or similar arrangements for informal consultations with women's groups and non-governmental organizations on individual conflict situations. That would undoubtedly allow progress to be made in the practice, treatment and promotion of positive solutions in specific cases that deserve the attention of the international community.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Canada.

Mr. Normandin (Canada) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the Government of Canada, I wish to thank the Chinese presidency of the Security Council for convening this debate.

In resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security, the Security Council called for women's participation and involvement in all efforts to prevent and resolve conflicts and build lasting peace. Eight years later, we have only begun to answer that call.

The United Nations and its Member States have undertaken important measures to increase the representation and participation of women. We now have here a significant body of research findings and many widely known best practices. For instance, when sexual violence cases are prosecuted at the outset, impunity for crimes targeting women is less of an obstacle to women's engagement in peacebuilding. In addition, when women are included in peace talks, a more inclusive and sustainable peace is negotiated.

We know what is needed: vastly increased representation of women at all levels of decision-making as negotiators, mediators, police officers, soldiers, military observers and special representatives of the Secretary-General. On that issue, I would like to highlight that there is currently only one woman among the special representatives of the Secretary-General. Among United Nations special envoys, there are none.

In his most recent report, the Secretary-General noted the excellent work carried out by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the United Nations Development Programme, among others, in promoting women's participation in peace talks, in particular those in Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nepal, Somalia and the Sudan. In that connection I would like to note that, in the Sudan, Canada has provided technical assistance to efforts to integrate women's rights and equality concerns and to strengthen the participation of women in the Darfur peace process.

Allow me to highlight the fact that only 7.4 per cent of United Nations police personnel in peace operations, and 10 per cent of those deployed by Canada, are women. Canada is undertaking recruiting efforts to increase the representation of women police officers in missions, taking into account the impact it can have on the perception of the role of women in the host country. Canada takes inspiration from best practices, such as India's formed police unit, the first all-female United Nations contingent, which is deployed in Liberia. I have been able to witness their work first-hand on the ground.

(*spoke in English*)

In another example of measures that we as Member States can take, Canada has deployed a gender adviser to Afghanistan's Ministry of the Interior to assist in the development of policies and programmes aimed at increasing the representation of women in the Afghan National Police. That will assist police operations in fulfilling their protection role.

With the adoption of resolution 1820 (2008) in June, the Security Council recognized the critical relationship between sexual violence as a weapon of war and the maintenance of international peace and security, as well as the fundamental importance of women's participation in all processes related to ending sexual violence in conflict. In that respect, Canada is pleased to be supporting the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre courses on sexual and gender-based violence intervention, prevention and investigation, which are offered to 60 female and male African police personnel currently deployed to the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur.

Canada calls on the Security Council to identify, report and respond systematically and comprehensively to all instances of sexual violence in countries on its agenda. The evidence demonstrates that part of that response must be support for women's participation in

the peace process. Despite efforts such as those and many more, progress has been slow and unreliable. New research by UNIFEM demonstrates that in the minority of cases in which such information is available, women's participation in peace talks has averaged approximately 7 per cent in recent years.

Clearly, the ad hoc approach is not having the desired effect. Increased women's participation requires a long-term commitment to applying systematically the measures that are known to have a positive and sustained impact. It requires the systematic inclusion of women in all peace processes, including peace talks. By now, that should be a standard practice. We also know that gender advisers can provide valuable technical guidance to United Nations mission staff. Every United Nations mission should have a full-time gender adviser. Again, by now, that too should be a standard practice.

In conclusion, Canada is convinced that a sustained and systematic approach will enable us to reach our shared goal. Not only is full, equal and meaningful participation by women just — lasting peace depends upon it.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Ireland.

Mr. Kavanagh (Ireland): Ireland welcomes this opportunity to address the Security Council on the issue of women and peace and security. I would like to express my appreciation to you, Sir, and to the People's Republic of China for convening this open debate and facilitating discussion of the international community's response to Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). The concept paper (S/2008/655) provided by your presidency of the Council has lent valuable assistance to States in preparing for today's debate.

I have the honour to speak today on behalf of the Human Security Network, a cross-regional group of countries comprised of Austria, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Greece, Ireland, Jordan, Mali, Norway, Slovenia, Switzerland and Thailand, with South Africa as an observer.

Eight years after the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), we warmly welcomed the adoption by the Council earlier this year of resolution 1820 (2008), which a number of Human Security Network members were pleased to co-sponsor. The horror of gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse has repeatedly been brought to the attention of the Security Council. It demands an urgent and effective response from the international community. In recognition of that, Ireland has chosen to focus on gender-based violence as the main theme of our term as Chair of the Human Security Network, a position we will hold through May 2009.

Resolution 1820 (2008) builds on the foundations laid by resolution 1325 (2000) in emphasizing our collective responsibility to work to combat sexual violence in situations of armed conflict. The Security Council reiterated its deep concern that acts of sexual violence in situations of armed conflict "continue to occur, and in some situations have become systematic and widespread, reaching appalling levels of brutality" (*resolution 1820 (2008), ninth preambular paragraph*).

Recognizing the ongoing and urgent need for full and effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his useful report on that topic (S/2008/622). The report is encouraging in that it records significant progress towards implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Nevertheless, it also highlights the extent of the work yet to be done in that area. It emphasizes the need for the international community to redouble its efforts to promote full and meaningful implementation of the resolution. Action is also required to ensure delivery of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), as previously highlighted by Slovenia on behalf of the Human Security Network in a statement to the Security Council in October 2006.

The implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) is not, in Ireland's view, a matter solely for the Security Council or, indeed, for the United Nations system. All Member States must take responsibility for the implementation of the resolution through their own national activities. The development of national action plans is a key means by which Member States commit themselves to fulfilling that responsibility. Only through such a process can countries assess activities already carried out in that area and commit themselves to tackling outstanding issues identified.

In a national capacity, Ireland, for its part, is currently developing its own national action plan and we intend the process to be guided by the experiences of women and men in countries emerging from conflict. To that end, we hope to work in partnership

with Liberia and with Timor-Leste in a process of cross-learning. While we recognize the need for diverse approaches in different contexts, we hope that the collaboration will result in a concerted effort in all three countries — Liberia, Timor-Leste and Ireland — to effect real, immediate and meaningful change for women who have experienced conflict and who can and should be stakeholders in State-building and peacebuilding.

The continued prevalence of gender-based violence in conflict is a cause of great concern to the Human Security Network. It is a grave violation of all accepted standards of conduct and a challenge to our common humanity. We believe that the international community must act, in accordance with resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008), both to eliminate instances of such violations and to ensure that victims have full and meaningful access to justice and that impunity for the perpetrators of such crimes is combated.

We recall that the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court specifically defines rape and other forms of sexual violence as war crimes and crimes against humanity. The Human Security Network urges the Security Council to work together with relevant stakeholders to ensure the prosecution of such crimes and to eliminate the impunity with which they are perpetrated.

As part of a comprehensive approach to seeking sustainable peace, justice, truth and national reconciliation, we stress the need for the exclusion of sexual violence crimes from amnesty provisions in the context of conflict resolution processes.

Women are highly active and effective in informal peace processes. The challenge lies in ensuring their participation in formal processes where peace agreements are negotiated. The members of the Human Security Network are committed to supporting meaningful steps to promote and enhance the role of women in peace processes and to integrate gender equality more effectively in that context. Such measures will strengthen the legitimacy of decision-making processes, which are so vital to the creation of durable foundations for peace and prosperity.

Resolution 1325 (2000) was born of a recognition of the particular impact of war on women and of the fact that this heinous impact required special attention and action on the part of the international community. As is highlighted regularly in frequent reports provided to the Council and also in the media, that need continues. It will take increasingly vigorous and relevant action to mitigate and eliminate the consequences of war on women. To be successful, the process must facilitate the leadership role of women in conflict resolution and peacebuilding without detracting from the shared responsibility for results that rests on all of us, irrespective of gender.

In conclusion and in that context, on behalf of the Human Security Network and on behalf of Ireland in our national capacity, I wish to commend the Council's continuing attention to that urgent and vital task.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Bangladesh.

Mr. Sorcar (Bangladesh): Let me begin by thanking you, Mr. President, for your initiative in having organized this open debate on women, peace and security. The concept paper that you have submitted (S/2008/655) has been very useful to us and, I believe, to many other delegations.

Women's contributions to peace have long been ignored and underestimated. They tend to fade into the background when official peace negotiations begin. Such negotiations are often identified as male domains and considered to be closer to a man's reality than to a woman's. However, peace is much more than the ending of direct conflict, which is often fought by men. That lacuna leads to the formulation of narrow policies and programmes in which the concerns of women are not adequately addressed. It is therefore important to appreciate the complex way the gender dimension interacts with conflict resolution.

The realignment of gender roles and positions should be an integral part of our approach to the challenge of rebuilding war-torn societies. The international commitment to engaging women in peace talks should be honoured by preparing concrete guidelines for enabling women's participation as part of negotiating delegations and in expert and observer roles.

Involving women in peace initiatives in greater numbers alone cannot ensure their equal participation or the quality of their engagement. Peace negotiations should involve informed cross-sections of women, including those directly affected by conflicts, who have the expertise to contribute and make a difference in

engagement. While creating a greater political space for women, States must also ensure that women may operate there in their own right. To that end, States must invest in capacity-building to emphasize women's full role in conflict resolution.

Concerted efforts are needed for research, analysis and knowledge-sharing on the situation of women and girls in conflict situations to inform effective policy and programme interventions. A monitoring system based on non-discriminatory standards should be established to reflect the real progress made and to identify the gaps in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). A working group on women, peace and security may be useful in that regard. Use of information and communication technology tools and the media can raise public awareness and advocate for the strengths of women in promoting peace and security around the world.

The Council should pursue a stronger and more systematic working relationship with civil society, non-governmental organizations and women's organizations through the increased use of the Arria Formula meetings or similar arrangements at all levels. National action plans and initiatives must take up gender mainstreaming for peace and security rather than merely fill up gender quotas. Such national efforts should undergo gender auditing. While national plans are formulated, efforts should be made to integrate women who are direct stakeholders in the peace process. However, in order to have the desired impact on the ground, the work of national Governments must be sustained by increased international cooperation. The United Nations gender machinery should also be provided with adequate resources to complement national efforts.

Multidimensional peacekeeping operations have a large potential to address the security and well-being of women in conflict and post-conflict situations. Troop- and police-contributing countries must continue to increase the numbers of uniformed and civilian female personnel. They should also meet their obligations to ensure that pre-deployment training for their military and civilian personnel is complemented with mission-specific training, community orientation and familiarization with local gender dynamics. Pre-deployment training should also include familiarization with the shift of orientation in civilian protection, which considers the addressing of sexual violence as fundamental to the achievement of mission objectives. Deployments should routinely include personnel with expertise in gender issues and in addressing sexual violence who can inform deployment planning and resourcing.

A reinforced commitment to the integration of a gender perspective is also necessary to transform the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations into a body that actively contributes to larger efforts to implement resolution 1325 (2000). We welcome the adoption of resolution 1820 (2008) and believe that it will further facilitate the United Nations peacekeeping and peacebuilding endeavours.

Bangladesh supports a greater role for women in all United Nations peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions. As one of the largest troop-contributing countries to United Nations peacekeeping operations, Bangladesh is ever conscious of our responsibility to incorporate the gender dimension, particularly the essential elements of resolution 1325 (2000), into the pre-deployment training of peacekeepers. In the coming days, the number of women in peacekeeping forces from Bangladesh is set to increase to ensure the gender balance in our share of the deployment.

The Peacebuilding Commission should fully implement resolution 1325 (2000) in conflict resolution, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation. As a member of the Peacebuilding Commission, we remain wary of integrating gender perspectives into the formulation of integrated peacebuilding strategies.

Since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), the world has witnessed heightened international attention devoted to the enhancement of the role of women in peace and security. Nevertheless, the challenges still outpace the achievements. Women continue to languish in all conflict and post-conflict situations. Failure to address their concerns in formal peace processes has made peace and development unsustainable. The international community needs to summon all its political will to raise a greater sense of urgency and consciousness among all stakeholders to create an environment in which the world's women are free from the fallout of wars and conflicts.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Switzerland.

Mr. Maurer (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I would like to thank you, Sir, for having

organized this open debate and to thank all those who made briefings this morning.

Following the significant progress made last June with the adoption of resolution 1820 (2008), our present debate emphasizes another key step — the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). The Secretary-General's report offers invaluable recommendations for all actors on increasing the inclusion of women at all stages of peace processes. My country is committed to following up on the recommendations and is prepared to contribute.

First of all, it is women on the ground who are the vectors of change. Switzerland is concerned by the fact that they are not yet sufficiently represented in the formal structures of peace processes. If we are to increase their participation at the negotiating table, we must make their initiatives visible. My country has supported and will continue to support activities aimed at achieving such participation, for example, the International Women's Commission for a Just and Sustainable Israeli-Palestinian Peace or projects through programmes to promote peace in Colombia, Nepal or Burundi, for example.

The United Nations plays a key role in increasing the inclusion of women. That is why we support the enhancement of gender capacities in the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations by making available personnel and methodologies. For that same reason, we support efforts to better mainstream gender equality in humanitarian activities. In that context, I would like to mention the specific example of the project of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee.

Switzerland's 1325 National Action Plan, adopted a year and a half ago, is a reference document for mobilizing human and financial resources. It is thanks to that instrument that we are able to co-finance the United Nations Stop Rape Now initiative. And we are relying on that instrument both to increase the secondment of women to peace operations as well as to encourage women candidacies for higher-level positions within the United Nations. We hope that all contributing countries will succeed in significantly raising the visibility and the influence of women in that field.

Finally, the Security Council has the power to integrate gender issues even more systematically into its mandates. It could more frequently take the opportunity to listen to experts of both genders, for example the High Commissioner for Human Rights, but also other people within the framework of Arria Formula meetings. Furthermore, we hope that deliberations on an effective mechanism for implementing resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008) will be successful.

The Secretary-General's report also reveals some shocking facts. In some conflicts, three out of four women are raped, and the perpetrators, with very few exceptions, are never convicted. Such crimes are the most serious assault on a person's physical integrity and can constitute genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes. It is imperative that the perpetrators are brought to justice. Such crimes destroy the socio-economic fabric of communities and prevent women from becoming more involved in peace processes. Moreover, they are a major obstacle to achieving the Millennium Development Goals. That link is a key element of the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development.

We are all responsible for preventing such unacceptable crimes and for combating impunity. The international criminal tribunals, and in particular the International Criminal Court, play a key role in that struggle. They have the appropriate means to prosecute those acts of violence.

In your capital, Beijing, Sir, in 1995, 189 countries made a commitment under United Nations auspices to the vision of a more egalitarian society by signing a Platform for Action in close cooperation with civil society. That momentum contributed significantly to the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). It is high time that we looked to the future and set new ambitious aims for the medium term. In 2010, we will mark the resolution's tenth anniversary. Switzerland supports the idea of a high-level review conference that could mobilize decision makers and provide new impetus.

We share the analysis of the Secretary-General that implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) has made progress, but we also agree that a considerable gap remains between reality and political intentions. We must, therefore, continue to make significant efforts and thus demonstrate that celebrating the resolution's tenth anniversary is genuinely merited.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Germany.

Mr. Matussek (Germany): Germany welcomes this year's Security Council debate on women and peace and security, marking the eighth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000). Germany associates itself with the statement made by the French presidency of the European Union and would like to add the following remarks.

We welcome the particular emphasis of this year's debate on the issue of women's equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security. Resolution 1325 (2000) has given us a very clear mandate in that regard. Unfortunately, as today's debate and the report of the Secretary-General (S/2008/622) have shown, many structural and institutional impediments remain. We call upon the United Nations system and upon ourselves, the Member States, to step up our efforts leading to concrete advancement in the equal inclusion of women in peace talks, justice processes and peacekeeping.

Let me emphasize that Germany firmly believes that the creation of a strong and effective United Nations gender entity has to be part of those efforts. We hope that the Secretariat will soon provide the membership with the requested detailed paper on modalities, so that substantive action can be taken before the end of the current session of the General Assembly.

Resolution 1325 (2000) and the Secretary-General's report rightly emphasize the essential role of training United Nations staff, peacekeeping personnel and civil society as a means of ensuring the equal participation of women. Let me therefore highlight some best practices and some examples of how Germany actively contributes to the effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in the field of training.

The Centre for International Peace Operations was established by the German Federal Government in June 2002 with the aim of enhancing Germany's civilian capacity for crisis prevention. The Centre's core mandate is the training, recruitment and support of German civilian personnel for peace operations and election observation missions, conducted in particular by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the European Union (EU) and the United Nations. The Centre cooperates closely with international and other European training centres, such as the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre in Ghana, and is a founding member of the EU Group on Training. Gender aspects, in particular the role of women in conflict resolution, are consistently taken into account in the design of training modules. Overall, since 2002, a total of 416 women from Germany and 129 women from abroad have participated in the Centre's training courses. In 2007, 52 per cent of participants in such training courses were women.

The German Government also funds a pilot project called the Mobile Peace Academy OMNIBUS 1325. That "bus line" has since toured several countries in the northern and southern Caucasus regions. On each of its stops, it has conducted train-the-trainer sessions with local non-governmental organizations, public officials, teachers and journalists on the relevance of resolution 1325 (2000) and on the integration of a gender perspective into their work for peace in the region. Just last week, the bus returned to Berlin and was greeted with a high-profile press conference.

The adoption in June this year of resolution 1820 (2008) on women and peace and security and sexual violence in armed conflict was a landmark achievement. It strengthened and further developed our commitment to the protection of women in situations of conflict and their active participation in the promotion of peace and security. Resolution 1820 (2008) created many new obligations for the United Nations, for the Security Council and for Member States. Inter alia, the Secretariat was asked to submit a comprehensive and operational report on the implementation of resolution 1820 (2008) by June 2009.

I am pleased to announce today that Germany has decided to provide the necessary funds for the recruitment of an additional policy specialist in the Peacekeeping Best Practices Section of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, whose task it will be to oversee coordination of that report. In addition, he or she will be tasked with designing a global strategy for the implementation of resolution 1820 (2008) and with developing and elaborating key training messages and an outreach and partnership strategy, including with troop- and police-contributing countries.

We are confident that Germany's financial contribution will significantly facilitate the submission

of a report that will be substantive and operational and will allow us to further develop the vision of resolution 1820 (2008). We take that contribution as proof that Germany, as a friend of resolution 1325 (2000), is deeply committed to the vision of both landmark resolutions, 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008), and will continue to undertake concrete efforts for their implementation.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Republic of the Congo.

Mr. Biaboroh-Iboro (Congo) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, Sir, I would like to express my delegation's pleasure at seeing you presiding over this traditional debate on implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). A debate on this issue of universal importance follows up on the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing; it is an issue which today continues to be of major concern.

I take this opportunity to thank the Secretary-General for his report on women and peace and security (S/2008/622), which enlightens us with regard to implementation of the resolution at all levels. We also thank Ms. Rachel Mayanja, Mr. Alain Le Roy, Ms. Inés Alberdi and Ms. Sarah Taylor for their informative statements.

At the current stage, what assessment can we make of the effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), eight years after it was adopted? My delegation has studied the Secretary-General's report with keen interest and wishes to make the following comments.

In general terms, a reading of the report makes apparent weaknesses in the statistics that could allow us to better asses the impact of actions taken with regard to women's participation in the various areas studied. For instance, in paragraph 41, there is nothing to support the assertion that peacekeeping missions have facilitated the participation of women in the elections of some countries. Furthermore, there is a discrepancy between the many measures taken by Member States and the international community to increase the participation of women in certain domains and the actual results that have been achieved. We can ask ourselves about the relevance of some of the measures taken.

As for the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, it is undeniable that sexual violence has become commonplace, and the general climate of impunity does not favour the rigorous application of resolution 1325 (2000). Indeed, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in Uganda, in the Sudan, in Burundi, in the Central African Republic and in Haiti, past and ongoing conflicts have all been characterized by the massive and systematic use of sexual crimes, usually committed by armed groups if not by forces of law and order or even by peacekeeping troops. Moreover, sexual violence is common in post-conflict periods as well.

My delegation welcomes the adoption of resolution 1820 (2008), but we eagerly await the publication of the Secretary-General's report on that topic. My delegation also expresses its support for the principle of zero-tolerance advocated by the United Nations, which should be more rigorously enforced.

As for the protection and representation of women, despite efforts made by the United Nations and the remarkable on-site work of non-governmental organizations, much remains to be done, particularly in combating sexual violence and in promoting the access of women to decision-making positions, especially in the areas of peace and security. We will need greater mobilization, by both the international community and Member States, in order to maintain previous gains with a view to reducing the inequalities observed at various levels in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

We wish to congratulate the 10 Member States who have drawn up national plans of action to establish strategic measures in the framework of the full application of the resolution. We urge the other Member States to do the same.

As for measures aimed at capacity-building for Member States, my delegation notes the efforts made with a view to managing activities to support gender equality and the emancipation of women. Nevertheless, we feel that the international community, including the United Nations, has an essential role to play in national capacity-building, in particular as it regards defining policies and strategies on women, peace and security. Greater financial and human resources must be allocated in order to achieve the objectives.

There is no peace without sustainable development and there is no development without a

lasting peace. In this interplay, the role of women alongside men must be addressed and must be promoted and strengthened in all peace processes. It is regrettable that women are not called on much in the decision-making on crisis resolution and are generally skipped over in negotiations or peace agreements processes.

My country, which has experienced internal armed conflicts for an entire decade, has not been spared that situation, but the Government is taking measures to integrate the gender dimension when we draw up policies and programmes. At the subregional level, Congolese women are taking active roles in activities related to the security and stability of the Great Lakes region.

In seeking lasting peace, the first ladies of Africa took stock of the problem in 1997, in Nigeria, by establishing the Mission of the First Ladies of Africa, known as MIPREDA. As part of that process, the sixth conference of that organization was held in Brazzaville from 12 to 15 February 2008 with the theme "Civil and humanitarian diplomacy and gender issues in the maintenance of peace in Africa". At the end of the conference, the First Ladies adopted, in the spirit of resolution 1325 (2000), a declaration and a plan of action for 2008-2010, seeking to increase the involvement of women in the management, settlement and prevention of conflicts and in the peacebuilding process. They also established a continent-wide network of women involved in peace negotiations.

My delegation hopes that the presidential statement to be issued at the close of this debate will contribute to promoting the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), which, in our view, is inseparably linked to other relevant decisions of the Security Council, particularly 1612 (2005) on children in armed conflicts, 1625 (2005) on conflict prevention, 1674 (2006) on protection of civilians in armed conflicts and 1820 (2008) on sexual violence against women.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Mrs. Aitimova (Kazakhstan): Allow me to commence my statement by expressing gratitude to the President for holding this Security Council meeting on the topic of women and peace and security. Let me also thank Ms. Rachel Mayanja, Ms. Inés Alberdi and Ms. Sarah Taylor for their informative statements.

Kazakhstan welcomes the open nature of these deliberations and the enlarged list of participants in this debate. We hope that the contributions of States not affected by any armed conflicts might somehow be useful in the adoption of the meeting's outcome document — not only in armed conflict, but in general.

Eight years have passed since Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) laid a cornerstone for a stronger decision-making role for women in peace processes. Periodic reports of the Secretary-General demonstrate the obvious progress achieved in increased women's involvement in the United Nations peacebuilding operations and in the mitigation of the negative influence of armed conflicts on them. However, despite the undoubted importance of women's active participation in the peace negotiation and decision-making processes, such achievements do not yet meet expectations.

The adoption of resolution 1820 (2008) was a landmark achievement. We believe that it is necessary to develop concrete strategies that ensure gender equality even in armed conflict situations.

We propose that United Nations efforts focus on the promotion of women in the fields in which they initially have a comparative advantage. In this regard, we may refer to women's involvement in humanitarian action, operation of camps for refugees and displaced persons, and reintegration and rehabilitation of the civilian population and child combatants. Women's participation in peacekeeping operations can be increased by bringing them on as civil humanitarian staff. However, that measure of improvement should not negatively influence the number of women participating in official peace-related negotiations and in the political decision-making on such issues.

My delegation deems it useful to attract more world-renowned female leaders to the matters of peacekeeping and peacebuilding. The international authority and rich experience of such women can be duly applied in the settlement of those critical issues during armed conflicts.

Kazakhstan highly values the United Nations achievements in ensuring women's equal participation in conflict resolution at the political level. We are pleased to note that women hold key posts in the

Secretariat and in the United Nations specialized agencies dealing with women and children. This trend must be maintained if resolution 1325 (2000) is to be successfully implemented. In addition, one must agree that it is easier for women leaders to recognize the special needs and wants of women and children affected by armed conflict. Their understanding can have a positive impact on the effective provision of humanitarian aid, for which there is an increasing demand by affected populations.

Kazakhstan welcomes the development of a roster of women candidates for United Nations vacancies at all levels. We believe that that step is a real confirmation of effective implementation of the strategy for the advancement of women.

Besides promoting women's rights through the increased presence of women as official representatives of States and in the United Nations itself, it would be beneficial for there to be additional deep engagement with politically active women and relevant non-governmental organizations. Such interested parties could act as alternative sources of information in decision-making processes and in the drafting of outcome documents.

We believe that efforts of all women engaged in peace processes deserve recognition. Indeed, official United Nations acknowledgement of the considerable contributions made by women to the cause of peace and security could inspire others to take a similar path and excel in it.

Since the assignment of women to any leadership positions in the field requires that they have relevant professional training, the promotion of education in the field of peace processes should become an integral part of educational practice worldwide.

In conclusion, I wish to emphasize the positive change in the perception of women, not solely as victims of armed conflicts but also as a driving force behind peacebuilding. This is the true meaning of gender equality: providing women with extensive opportunities to play a stronger role in preventing and settling armed conflicts and in building peace.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now call on the representative of the United Arab Emirates.

Mr. Al-Jarman (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): It is my honour, Mr. President, to express our appreciation for your efforts in steering the affairs of the Council for this month and for your selection of the topic of women and peace and security for this month's open debate. I also wish to express our appreciation for the recent report of the Secretary-General on this subject, which is contained in document S/2008/622.

The Security Council's adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) eight years ago represented an acknowledgment by the international community of the important principal role that women should play alongside men, on an equal footing, in peacekeeping operations, the prevention of conflicts and disputes and the maintenance of international peace and security. This fact has become clear after wars and conflicts in many regions have proved that the low participation of women in those fields has made women and children more vulnerable to acts of aggression, killing, sexual violence, mutilation, starvation, forced displacement and other inhumane practices that violate their rights and that constitute war crimes that are punishable under international criminal law.

The United Arab Emirates has closely followed with satisfaction the efforts made to date within the United Nations system, at the national level and in civil society to maintain the gender perspective in peacekeeping operations. But we note that the participation of women in such operations continues to be weak, irregular and ineffective due to the absence of political will and the lack of necessary resources. We therefore call upon the Security Council and on all relevant agencies, funds and departments of the United Nations to seek to achieve gender equality while fulfilling their mandates to bring about peace and stability, establish the rule of law and carry out security sector reform, all of which are necessary for sustainable peace and security.

We emphasize the following important element. First, there needs to be an evaluation and update of the plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) to address weak points, including those related to insufficient funding for gender mainstreaming projects and activities to enhance the role of women in the key areas of prevention, protection, participation, relief and recovery.

Secondly, there needs to be enhanced cooperation among United Nations entities, Governments, civil society organizations and task forces of regional governmental and non-governmental organizations, especially regarding exchanges of information and best

practices that have proved to be effective in post-conflict countries. This approach will ensure the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), including the creation of an enabling environment for the total empowerment of women and the expansion of women's direct political participation in mediation and negotiation processes, peace talks, implementation of agreements and other humanitarian and development operations. In our view, for these activities to be effective, gender balance in all delegations and task forces is required. In addition, women's interests and concerns should be prominently included in the agendas all peace talks.

Thirdly, the important role of the United Nations and donor countries in assisting post-conflict countries in funding and implementing projects aimed at strengthening national legislation and training programmes in the areas of human rights and gender mainstreaming should be developed. This approach will ensure the active participation of women in various sectors in accordance with national goals and international standards that call for greater accountability, improved monitoring and reporting systems on the status of women, on the protection of their rights and on combating violence and illegal practices, including crimes committed by peacekeeping personnel.

Fourthly, there is a need to develop better creative methods and applications for training and empowering women in order to facilitate their involvement in the legal reform process, democratization, the drafting of constitutions and election laws, voter education, leadership of political parties and participation in local governance and reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts in post-conflict areas.

Fifthly, there needs to be strengthened national, regional and international legislation related to the establishment of commissions of inquiry and national and international courts that are independent and impartial.

Sixthly, comprehensive plans for raising public awareness, especially in conflict and post-conflict countries, should be put in place in order to promote the full implementation of international humanitarian law and human rights law.

Over the past three decades, the United Arab Emirates has come a long way in advancing the status of women and strengthening their effective participation in economic, social, cultural and political developments. In recent years, and in recognition of the gender equality called for in resolution 1325 (2000), my country has implemented a number of training programmes designed to integrate women of the United Arab Emirates, alongside men, into humanitarian and civil defence activities, including military missions abroad that are linked to relief programmes and peacekeeping in areas of conflict and instability, with a view to alleviating the suffering of affected populations. I would cite as an example of such activity the establishment of the Refugee Women's Fund to protect refugee and displaced women and others who face hardship as result of conflict in their home countries.

Believing that the women of the United Arab Emirates have an important role to play in decision-making and strengthening national stability and security, our Government has encouraged them to strive for significant and unprecedented gains by increasing their representation in the executive, legislative and judicial branches. It has also enacted the necessary legislation to protect women's constitutional rights on the basis of gender equality with men in rights and duties, and has acceded to a number of international conventions safeguarding the rights of women, particularly the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. The Government has also enacted a family code with a view to protecting women's rights and dignity.

In conclusion, we reiterate our concerns at the continuing dire humanitarian situation of Palestinian women and children as a result of the ongoing Israeli aggression, siege and occupation of the Palestinian territories, in blatant breach of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 and other international humanitarian laws and norms. We call on the Security Council to assume its full responsibilities by insisting that Israel fully honour its obligations under the relevant United Nations resolutions. If it does not, our region will remain in a state of instability and insecurity, which in turn will generate more violence against women. We also hope that our deliberations on this item will lead to the creation of a comprehensive institutional approach to protecting women and children and to improving their conditions before, during and after conflicts.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Swaziland.

Mr. Nhleko (Swaziland): I thank you, Sir, for organizing this meeting and for the opportunity to participate in these important deliberations focusing on women's equal participation and full involvement in all efforts to maintain peace and security.

At the outset, my delegation wishes to align itself with the statement delivered by the representative of the Republic of South Africa on behalf of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). We further thank the Secretary-General for his report, contained in document S/2008/622, and we take note of its references to and assessment of measures to implement resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008).

This year marks the eighth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), which examines issues relating to women, peace and security in peace negotiations, decision-making, refugee camps, mine clearance and sanctions. One of the main objectives of resolution 1325 (2000) is gender mainstreaming in all aspects of peace and security. It advocates major changes in procedure, delivery, attitudes and habits of the international community that are necessary to integrate women's issues into disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. The resolution has played a key role in changing approaches and attitudes towards women. The critical role of Member States in the full and effective implementation of the resolution therefore cannot be overemphasized.

The Kingdom of Swaziland embraces a vision of harmonizing the interplay between development, peace and security. In the same spirit, we recognize the importance of ensuring respect for the equal rights of women in the security sector of our country and the subregion. We attach great importance to the participation of women in peace processes and decision-making.

We are a signatory to the 2008 SADC Protocol on Gender and Development. The Protocol represents the beginning of the road towards ensuring that States parties put in place measures to ensure that women have equal representation and participation in key decision-making positions in conflict resolution and peacebuilding processes by 2015.

We have also established the Royal Swaziland Police Gender Network, which was launched on 10 April 2008. The Network is in line with the Women's Network Committee of the Southern African Regional Police Chief Council Organization. The main objective of the Network is to promote and implement SADC and other international instruments related to the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against women. The Network Committee will enhance the efforts of our gender coordinating unit and other relevant stakeholders. It is also my Government's desire to train a women's service corps that will be able to participate in regional peace support initiatives. In that respect, we urge our international partners to assist us in achieving that objective within our security sector.

Despite notable progress made towards the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), regrettably violence against women persists in conflict zones throughout the world. Women and girls are still targets in such deplorable acts as rape and other forms of sexual violence. Unfortunately, such acts have severe consequences, such as early and unwanted pregnancies, the contraction of HIV and AIDS, psychological trauma and an increase in the number of displaced persons, especially women and children.

To that end, it is our firm belief that no effort should be spared to prevent conflict. More resources should also be devoted to education and to integrating women into all levels of society, including decision-making. If all efforts fail to stop a conflict, international actors must be armed with the requisite information to address cases of sexual violence and abuse against women and to end the impunity of the perpetrators of such acts. We therefore look forward to the implementation of resolution 1820 (2008), which notes that women and girls are particularly targeted by the use of sexual violence and stresses that such violence can significantly exacerbate conflicts and impede peace processes.

In conclusion, the Kingdom of Swaziland supports the role of the Security Council in the prevention of conflicts, peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction. The participation of women in each stage of the peace process should be enhanced and more attention should be given to their status and role. We further reiterate our respect for the protection of women's rights and gender mainstreaming throughout any peace process. It is important to recognize that women and girls are essential pillars of all societies and that their active empowerment and participation in

all areas of political, social, cultural and economic life remains crucial.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I give the floor to the representative of Israel.

Ms. Shalev (Israel): Allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your able stewardship of the Council this month and to thank you for convening this open debate on woman and peace and security. It is an important debate that reflects our commitment to the United Nations founding ideals of peace and security for men and women alike. As for myself, it is both a privilege and an honour to address this body on behalf of my Government as Israel's first female Ambassador to the United Nations.

This year we mark the sixtieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a document that set out a noble vision for the world and reaffirmed the equality of men and women. The past 60 years have witnessed substantial progress for women around the world. I come from a country that has had many women actively involved in the political process and public affairs from its establishment to the present day. Today, Israel features women in significant and meaningful positions of influence and authority, including the Foreign Minister and Vice-Prime Minister, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and the Speaker of the Knesset, to name just a few. In Israel we continue to witness increasing numbers of women in all walks of public life, including in peace negotiations and diplomacy.

All over the world, much more needs to be done. A recent presentation by the Special Rapporteur on violence against women stated that such violence persists in every country as a pervasive and universal violation of human rights. The United Nations and its various entities have an important and leading role to play in the protection of women's rights worldwide and in the promotion of women in national and international public affairs.

However, the commitment of the United Nations on this issue does not diminish the primary responsibility of national Governments and institutions to protect women, promote their equality and ensure their participation in all spheres of society.

On a local and national level, Israel remains committed to the principles of the landmark Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), which calls for an increase in the participation of women at decision-making levels in conflict resolution and in peace processes. Israel amended its women's equal rights law in the spirit of that resolution, mandating that the Israeli Government include women in any group appointed to peacebuilding negotiations. On a regional level, and just as the resolution calls for, Israel is proud that Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni is leading our peace negotiations with the Palestinians.

As part of our engagement on an international level, Israel contributed its first peacekeeper, a female police officer, to the United Nations peacekeeping mission in Georgia. In addition, Israel's international aid agency offers courses around the world in women's leadership as well as capacity-building for women's organizations across the developing world.

Those are only a few examples of Israel's commitment to the implementation of the Security Council resolution.

While resolution 1325 (2000) addresses women's participation in public life, the issue of violence against women remains a critical component of any such debate regarding women and peace and security. Israel co-sponsored Council resolution 1820 (2008), which signalled that acts of violence against women, in particular rape and sexual violence as instruments of warfare, are not only despicable acts but should be classified as war crimes and crimes against humanity. Sadly, across certain parts of the world we witness violence and continuing discrimination against women. In some countries, women and girls are subject to stoning, rape and violent repression. The international community should always, and consistently, confront and condemn such violations of basic human rights.

It is my hope that our words and our actions will offer hope to women around the globe. Today's discussion reflects our common vision for a better world and our commitment to the noble founding principles of the United Nations.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Iceland.

Mr. Hannesson (Iceland): Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security, continues to need full and effective implementation. It is well known that women and girls constitute the largest and most vulnerable groups of victims in armed conflicts. Iceland welcomes the

adoption of Security Council resolution 1820 (2008), recognizing sexual violence as a security problem requiring a systematic security response by stressing that sexual violence, when used or commissioned as a tactic of war, can significantly exacerbate situations of armed conflict and may impede the restoration of international peace.

Impunity continues to be a major problem. A climate of impunity for sexual violence continues to exist. We all have to join forces to end impunity for such crimes.

There is a need to make full use of available expertise, including from human rights mechanisms. Therefore Iceland encourages strengthened partnerships with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. Iceland fully endorses strengthening the human rights monitoring capacity of the Office within peacekeeping operations and country missions.

Although some progress has been made in advancing the fight against violence against women in conflict situations as well as in incorporating aspects of resolution 1325 (2000) in peace operations, when it comes to women's access to peace negotiations and political participation in post-conflict situations we have seen less success. Here, the obstacles are harder to overcome. Women's inclusion means power-sharing in structures and political contexts where this has often not happened before.

At the same time, resolution 1325 (2000) has considerable potential. It already provides a conceptual framework for women around the world to cooperate on bringing about their proper participation. There are also other commitments made by the international community, such as the Beijing Platform for Action, which calls for a 30 per cent minimum representation of women in decision-making bodies.

Iceland is of the view that equal participation of women in peace processes is fundamental for achieving, maintaining and promoting sustainable peace and security. In that context, I would like to pay tribute to the work of the International Women's Commission for a just and sustainable Palestinian-Israeli peace. The work of that group of eminent women from both sides of the community has stood out as a beacon. At this very difficult time in the peace process, that group deserves our continued support.

The Icelandic Ministry for Foreign Affairs, in cooperation with the University of Iceland, will host an international conference in Reykjavik in June 2009, with the focus on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000): how to ensure that women are included in formal and informal peace processes.

Iceland introduced a national plan of action for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) on 8 March this year. In relation to the plan, several projects have been funded that directly relate to the goals set out in the action plan, such as research by the Institute for Security Studies on the access of women to peace processes.

Gender equality and women's empowerment have been a driving force in the development of Iceland's society, contributing to the advancement of women in political decision-making, participation in the formal labour market and progressive legislation on parental leave. I am proud to announce that on 19 June 2008, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs signed a memorandum of understanding with the University of Iceland on setting up an International Research Centre for Gender Equality and a training programme, which will be launched in December this year. The objective of the Centre and the programme is to contribute to research, promote information and provide training on gender equality and gender perspectives, in particular in peacebuilding, post-conflict reconstruction and development.

I would like to emphasize that, like my colleague from Germany did earlier this afternoon, that Iceland believes that a strong and effective United Nations gender entity is essential and hopes that it will soon be agreed. We are looking forward to the requested detailed modalities paper from the Secretariat so that the membership can take substantive action before the end of the ongoing sixty-third session of the General Assembly.

The United Nations as a whole should redouble its efforts to recruit more women at all levels. The same appeal goes to all Member States. It is our responsibility to ensure that the United Nations has a solid basis to recruit from.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative from Afghanistan.

Mr. Tanin (Afghanistan): Thank you, Sir, for convening today's important debate on women and

peace and security. My delegation commends your leadership of this Council for the month of October. I would also like to express my appreciation for the Secretary-General's comprehensive report (S/2008/622) on the progress made in implementing resolution 1325 (2000).

The Government of Afghanistan is dedicated to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). However, in post-conflict countries such as Afghanistan, forces of insecurity are the greatest threat to the advancement of the three pillars of the resolution: the protection of women in war and peace, the promotion of women's rights and the participation of women in peace processes.

As the Secretary-General's report indicates, insecurity is the basic concern that must be addressed before true progress towards ensuring women's rights can be made. Instability affects the most vulnerable parts of the population, and women and children continue to account for the majority of casualties in hostilities.

In Afghanistan, the atrocities of the Taliban threaten the progress of women. During its rule in Afghanistan, the agenda of the Taliban included a tyrannical denial of all women's basic rights — the rights to free movement, to education and to work. Today, that goal of the Taliban appears unchanged; where they advance in Afghanistan, women's rights retreat. In areas of increased Taliban activity, there are pronounced restrictions on women's mobility, attacks on girls' schools and a decrease in services for women provided by our Government and aid agencies.

Despite the growing threat of insecurity, Afghanistan, with the support of the international community, has made several improvements in the participation of women in peace and security. The Government of Afghanistan has ensured that women's rights are enshrined in the Afghanistan Constitution, as well as all major international agreements such as the Afghanistan Compact and the recent Paris Declaration.

In addition, women have participated in the historical process from the Bonn Conference to the elections of 2004-2005 and beyond. Women have been appointed to high positions in national and local Governments, including cabinet-level posts. Today, women account for 27 per cent of the National Assembly and almost 26 per cent of civil servants. Habiba Sarabi, the successful female Governor of Bamiyan, is one notable example.

Afghanistan has also strengthened its governmental institutions to promote women's rights. The Ministry of Women's Affairs has achieved much through its dedicated advocacy for women. The National Justice Plan of Afghanistan seeks to improve women's involvement in the justice sector, and the National Action Plan for Women in Afghanistan aims at increasing women's participation in all areas of social, economic and political life.

Finally, the Government of Afghanistan, with international organizations and domestic groups, has worked tirelessly to promote women's rights in Afghanistan by improving access to health care, education and basic services. Today, 40 per cent of children in school are girls, and 81 per cent of the population now receives health care through the Basic Package of Health Services. Forty thousand more women now live through childbirth every year.

Despite those advances, Afghanistan needs to continue to do much more to meet the objectives of resolution 1325 (2000). Most immediately, the security situation continues to directly affect women's security and their access to health care, education and social protection. Continued terrorist activity by the Taliban and Al-Qaida is affecting the implementation and monitoring of all programmes and projects, especially in some southern and eastern parts of the country. In addition, poverty, the lack of education and unbalanced allocation of resources must also be addressed. More work is needed to ensure the participation of women in all parts of the stabilization process.

To continue to advance women's participation in peace and security, our country has a few observations to offer. First, international involvement is crucial. International support for national initiatives provides important gender-sensitivity training for national institutions, such as the national army and police force. Secondly, international training for women in the civil service and international support for female students in the form of schools and increased educational opportunities are also crucial. Lastly, coordinating roles, such as the role of United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, are immensely helpful in coordinating activities and sharing knowledge among organizations that are working to advance women's rights.

However, international partners must recognize certain factors. First, improvement should be internally driven. While international support is important for all of the aforementioned reasons, the international community should be cautioned that true reform for women's participation in peace and security should be generated within the context of the particular country. International involvement should be motivated by the needs of the women within the particular country. There should be no external imposition of standards. There should be no external political agendas.

Secondly, international troops should assist national efforts to protect women. In order to ensure better protection of women's participation in peace and security, gender sensitivity training should be mandatory for troops from all countries. In addition, their assistance is important in facilitating women's mobility in order to access water, health care and markets, and in creating the conditions for women's safe participation in the public and political life of the country. For example, in Afghanistan, international forces continue to protect roads on which women and families frequently travel to access Government services.

Thirdly, regional collaboration is important. The Secretary-General's advocacy of regional action plans and regional organizations to support national commitment is fully supported by our Government. As infringements on women's rights are often cross-boundary issues, such as the spillover of women refugees from one country to another during conflict situations, solutions should also be cross-boundary.

Fourthly is the importance of a cohesive approach. A successful approach to advancing women's participation in peace and security must address women's role in all major sectors of society. In Afghanistan, women's advancement must be addressed by quelling terrorism, eradicating poverty and addressing ignorance through education.

Fifthly, women must be involved in reconciliation processes. Talks to consolidate peace in post-conflict settings should involve women at every stage. Such talks cannot compromise women's rights in any way and must strongly adhere to the principles of true democracy and women's political participation.

Sixthly, there is a need for action, not words. Steps forward must move women's rights beyond slogans and good intentions. The gender adviser to the Afghan Ministry of the Interior has found that organizational inertia is perhaps the main cause of problems associated with gender inequity in the Government ministries. We need the political will and the genuine commitment to transform words into action. And, as the Paris Conference recently reminded us, international donors must deliver their pledged aid so that efforts to improve the standing of women can be sustained.

In conclusion, in order to advance the protection of women in war and peace, the promotion of women's rights and the participation of women in peace processes, Afghanistan would like to emphasize the importance of addressing the threat of insecurity. Security is the first concern of post-conflict countries that hope to make progress in the area of women's rights. After security is addressed, it is essential to recognize the importance of international involvement, regional collaboration, the inclusion of women in reconciliation processes and the need to move beyond words to action.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now call on the representative of Kenya.

Mr. Muita (Kenya): I have the honour to participate in today's debate. At the outset, let me express my appreciation to you, Mr. President, for organizing and presiding over this debate. I also thank Ms. Rachel Mayanja, Mr. Alain Le Roy, Ms. Inés Alberdi and Ms. Sarah Taylor for their insightful statements.

The special focus of today's debate on women's equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security could not have come at a better time. I believe that we must make concrete and specific efforts to advance the inclusion and participation of women in conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping, disarmament and security sector reform.

Kenya welcomes the report of the Secretary-General (S/2008/622), which offers useful recommendations on accelerating the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). It is now eight years since we adopted that landmark resolution. Commendable progress has been made through the efforts of Member States, the United Nations system and civil society. Nevertheless, much remains to be done. Each forward step requires rethinking of the next as progress continues. We must therefore continue to

work together by taking concrete measures in all areas and at all levels. That is in the interest of all peoples.

Women's contributions, both in the domestic arena and in the paid workforce, constitute crucial contributions to national economies. It is always women who are severely and negatively affected by war and other conflict situations. Very often, they have no real say in peace negotiations, justice processes, peacebuilding and reconstruction, or securing domestic stability and humanitarian assistance. It is therefore crucial that we collectively address the structural and institutional impediments to women's equal participation and full involvement. In that regard, it is important that more women be appointed to senior positions at United Nations Headquarters and in field missions.

Towards the end of its sixty-second session, the General Assembly made a bold move to adopt a draft resolution that included a general United Nations gender architecture. I believe that, when that structure is finally in place, it will remove the systemic impediments that have hampered women's participation in high-level decision-making and their involvement in peace initiatives.

At the national level, Kenya recognizes the centrality of gender equality and the critical role that women can play in the maintenance and promotion of peace and security. Our national policy on gender and development incorporates and integrates women into the mainstream of decision-making through regulatory and institutional reform. That is further complemented by the presidential decree of 2006 that reserved for women 30 per cent of all appointments, recruitment and promotions in the public sector. Those efforts to enhance the participation and involvement of women have started to bear fruit. Women are increasingly assuming leadership roles in many areas, especially the judicial, legislative and electoral sectors.

The beginning of this year was a particularly difficult period for Kenya following the post-election violence in January and February. Women and girls were particularly affected. Quick action by the Government, with the help of the United Nations and the greater international community, averted further deterioration of the situation. In the subsequent mediation process, women leaders participated as principal negotiators on both sides of the political divide. Two of those women are now serving as senior Cabinet ministers in the Grand Coalition Government.

In conclusion, I reaffirm once again my delegation's unequivocal support for the equal participation and full involvement of women in the maintenance and promotion of sustainable peace. We hope to see more women participating fully in the process of decision-making in matters relating to their needs and concerns.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now call on the representative of Argentina.

Mr. Argüello (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Permit me to begin by thanking you, Mr. President, for organizing this open debate, which clearly reflects the Security Council's commitment to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). That resolution represents a milestone in the attainment of our shared objective of ensuring that Council action is more effective and has lasting results.

Because of the lateness of the hour, I shall deliver a condensed version of my statement. The full version will be circulated to delegations by the Secretariat.

With a perspective centred on human rights, Argentina accords high priority to the situation of women and children in conflict and to women's participation as essential actors in peace processes, particularly in the peacebuilding phase. For the past 15 years, Argentina has included women in its peacekeeping deployments and is doing so today, in accordance with resolution 1325 (2000). Under the action plan adopted by the Argentine Ministry for Defence, a total of 341 women have been deployed thus far, almost 70 per cent of them in the past eight years. Currently, 26 women from my country are participating in peace missions in Haiti and Cyprus. Thus, Argentina ranks second, after Uruguay, in terms of the number of women participating in the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti.

We also wish to highlight the work that various agencies of the United Nations system are doing to protect and promote the rights of Haitian women and to promote their participation in the political, economic and social arenas. In that regard, we should recall the declaration adopted in Banff, Canada, at the Seventh Conference of Ministers of Defence of the Americas, which reaffirms the commitment to continue

mainstreaming the gender perspective in peacekeeping operations, pursuant to resolution 1325 (2000).

Argentina actively endorses the multiannual system-wide campaign launched by the Secretary-General to eliminate violence against women. In 2007, within the framework of that campaign, an awareness-raising campaign was promoted in the Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR) through a poster contest at Argentina's initiative. The goal of the contest was to raise the awareness of our country's populations about the situations of violence to which women and children are exposed in the public and private spheres.

Argentina appreciates the consideration of the role of regional institutions as indispensable actors in the promotion of peace, together with the fulfilment of United Nations mandates. In that regard, Argentina has worked hard within the framework of MERCOSUR to promote the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). It should be stressed that it was at Argentina's request that that issue was included in the agenda of MERCOSUR's twentieth special meeting on women, to be held in Brasilia on 31 October.

Argentina has promoted mainstreaming the gender perspective in security sector reform in order to create a more favourable atmosphere for the participation of women. In that connection, the Ministry for Defence has an observatory for women in the armed forces. It gives those responsible for formulating public policies on gender an essential tool for monitoring developments in the situation of women in the armed forces.

With regard to resolution 1820 (2008) on sexual violence, we wish to emphasize that the reform of Argentina's military justice system defines sexual abuse as a serious or very serious breach of discipline, depending on the case.

In order to ensure the active participation of women, it is essential to provide specific training with regard to conflict prevention, mediation, negotiation, peacekeeping, post-conflict reconstruction and humanitarian assistance. In that regard, Argentina has established the Argentine Joint Peacekeeping Operations Training Centre. In operation since 1995, it is a centre of excellence for sharing knowledge and experiences related to peacekeeping operations. In achieving those goals, the Training Centre has included gender topics in its curricula for participants in its courses as well as members of contingents to be deployed.

In conclusion, Argentina agrees with the views of the Secretary-General contained in his report (S/2000/622) with regard to the need to develop national action plans to identify priorities and resources and assign responsibilities and set timelines to guide the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Putting those plans into practice will contribute to bridging existing gaps between policies and their effective implementation.

I should like to end by saying that Argentina endorses the recommendations proposed by the Secretary-General, especially as regards devoting greater budgetary resources to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Portugal.

Mr. Salgueiro (Portugal): Let me start by joining others in thanking the President of the Security Council for the holding of this open debate on this very important matter. I would also like to thank Ms. Rachel Mayanja, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General; Mr. Alain Le Roy, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations; Ms. Inés Alberdi, Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women; and Ms. Sarah Taylor, Coordinator of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, for their fruitful and comprehensive interventions on the current situation of women with respect to peace and security.

Portugal aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of France on behalf of the European Union.

The adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) was a milestone in the promotion and protection of human rights. It brought to the attention of the Council the pressing issue of gender equality and the empowerment of women, but it also made clear that women have a role to play in conflict situations, besides that of victim: the role of peacemakers and peacekeepers.

We must ensure that women's voices are heard at all stages, from conflict prevention to conflict resolution and, of course, during post-conflict processes. It is our belief that the equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes has a positive impact on the international security system,

thus favouring the implementation of the objectives of the Security Council: peace and security.

In addition to the need to overcome the marginalization of women at all decision-making stages related to peacebuilding and conflict resolution, it is fundamental to develop policies that envisage the promotion of women's political, economic and social roles in post-conflict situations. In fact, situations of conflict have a great impact on women. They are most often the victims of violence, including sexual violence and its use as a weapon of war. At the same time, they also become the main providers of economic security and the source of survival for their families, often as heads of households. There is thus a need to ensure that, in post-conflict situations, we build on their experiences and create opportunities to empower women in their societies.

Portugal reaffirms its commitment to the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). In that regard, I would like to inform the Security Council that we are currently drafting our national plan of action to contribute to the implementation of that milestone document at the national, regional and international policy levels. The drafting is being carried out by a multidisciplinary team involving members of various governmental entities and ministries, namely, the Ministries for Foreign Affairs, Justice, Internal Affairs and Defence, as well as the presidency of the Council of Ministers responsible for gender equality policies. At an early stage, several members of civil society were invited to provide contributions. That participation will continue throughout the process, including during the implementation phase.

With regard to the content of the plan, our main focus is on the need to promote the participation of women at all stages of peace processes, namely, in peacekeeping missions and including in decision-making positions. It is also extremely relevant to ensure that all actors involved in peacekeeping missions, especially those at high-ranking levels, receive adequate gender sensitivity training. Finally, the need to prevent and combat violence against women and girls and to provide assistance to victims in conflict and post-conflict situations will also be at the core of the plan.

In order to put in place adequate policies to deal with perpetrators of sexual violence and to provide victims with the support they require — health and psychological support, access to the labour market and access to education for victims' children — it is fundamental that all parties to a conflict acknowledge that sexual abuses have been committed and that women's voices be heard during peace negotiation talks. As recent history has taught us, disregarding those matters will only serve to perpetuate impunity and impede the development of integral and efficient policies to address women's needs.

In that regard, let me also welcome the adoption of resolution 1820 (2008). As the Security Council has now recognized, sexual violence is indeed a security problem, including when used as a weapon of war. We should all strive to end that plight.

We would also like to take this opportunity to welcome the Secretary-General's campaign "Unite to End Violence against Women". Portugal, too, continuously strives to combat that scourge, in particular in the domestic sphere.

We welcome every opportunity to address resolution 1325 (2000). However, we believe that the implementation of the resolution should be a daily task. The gender perspective should be mainstreamed into the work of the Security Council.

We hope that this situation can be reviewed in the light of the new United Nations gender architecture. In that regard, let me express Portugal's hope that an agreement on the new strengthened and consolidated United Nations entity for women is reached during the current session of the General Assembly.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Morocco.

Mr. Chabar (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): First of all, on behalf of my delegation, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for having chosen the very important issue of women and peace and security as the subject of this month's open debate of the Security Council. This year, as we commemorate the eighth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), we should assess the implementation of the resolution and its impact on the situation of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict countries.

National measures are needed to ensure that vulnerable societies emerging from conflict eliminate those inhuman practices and reinforce the security and justice sectors through the launching of reconstruction processes in which men and women should take part

without any discrimination. In that respect, peacekeeping operations should support local peace initiatives launched by women and the participation of women's groups in all activities related to the peace process and the settlement of conflicts.

It is important to stress that the role of the Peacebuilding Commission, which was set up following the 2005 World Summit, is decisive for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). The Peacebuilding Commission has all the necessary tools to renew and enhance the role of women so that they can take part in reconstruction and peacebuilding activities in countries affected by the work of the Commission. The mainstreaming of gender equality in the Commission's Integrated Peacebuilding Strategies in Burundi, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau are success stories that need to be reproduced elsewhere.

My country therefore supports the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and of the relevant General Assembly resolutions, in particular resolutions 61/143 and 62/133 on the intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women and resolution 62/134 on the elimination of rape and other forms of sexual violence in all their manifestations, including in conflict and related situations. Those are effective instruments for promoting and protecting the rights of women in conflict and post-conflict situations and in all situations of violence.

It is clear that the active participation of women in peace processes, conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding and their empowerment are two vital ingredients for the sustainability of peace. To that end, the most recent report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security (S/2008/622) of 25 September 2008 assesses the progress achieved in implementing resolution 1325 (2000) by the Security Council and intergovernmental and regional organizations, and recounts the measures taken by Member States, United Nations entities and civil society.

However, while progress has been achieved in integrating the gender perspective in national policies and global strategies aimed at improving the situation of women, shortcomings and weaknesses persist in the actual implementation of those policies.

My country, which attaches considerable importance to resolution 1325 (2000), considers that its implementation must be carried out in the framework of a global and integrated approach that mobilizes the efforts of all Governments, civil society and international organizations in a coordinated and harmonized manner. In that respect, we are ready to cooperate bilaterally and provide direct technical assistance — to African countries in particular, when they have requested it — or to cooperate trilaterally, with the involvement of other partners, in order to ensure the implementation of that resolution.

For its part, Morocco has responded positively to the international movement that has been launched to combat violence against women. That response has been effected at many levels, in particular through the establishment of a national strategy for counteracting violence against women and the implementation of a plan of action to implement that strategy by strengthening neighbourhood institutions, legal services for women who are victims of violence, and legal, institutional, economic and social reforms.

Morocco has made considerable efforts, which have been broadly welcomed, to promote gender equality. In fact, my country considers such measures to be key to achieving good governance and the agreed development goals. Gender equality is an intrinsic part of the policies of my Government, which are part of a comprehensive process based on promoting economic solidarity, economic and social development and equal opportunity for all.

Morocco, which is aware that sustainable human development must include integrated gender policies, has for several years been taking proactive measures to promote economic and political participation by women. Our concrete action includes the integration of the gender dimension in the drafting and analysis of the national budget. We are one of the first countries to have done so.

I take this opportunity to express our full support for the many actions of the United Nations Development Fund for Women regional office in Morocco. Those actions reflect the growing interest in the issue of violence against women and in economic governance, as evidenced in efforts to integrate the gender dimension in development policies.

I do not want to dwell on the activities of my country with regard to gender equality and the promotion of women's rights in general in the context of the consolidation of the rule of law and democracy,

but I would like to reiterate my country's support for the Secretary-General's vision in that regard. His position is that the United Nations system has a role to play in enhancing national capacities, particularly at the highest level, in the definition of policies, the adoption of measures and the establishment of multilateral partnerships. That support must be coupled with financial resources and technical assistance in implementing those policies and putting an end to the atrocities committed against women in conflict situations.

To that end, my country believes that our efforts should be based on four major activities. First, the fate of women in conflict situations who are recruited against their will by armed groups and forced to carry weapons must be taken into account in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes. Secondly, the gender-specific dimension of the justice sector must be strengthened in order to prevent impunity for those responsible for such violence. Thirdly, the role of women in political, economic and social life must be enhanced. Fourthly, gender equality must be ensured in the various sectors of public life.

In conclusion, my delegation harbours the hope that this debate will contribute to enhancing the now-recognized role of women in the maintenance of peace and security and in peacebuilding.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Sweden.

Mr. Lidén (Sweden): Sweden welcomes the progress made in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) since its adoption eight years ago, but much more remains to be done. All of us — the United Nations and Member States — must intensify our efforts to address the situation, rights and roles of women in armed conflicts.

We also welcome the Secretary-General's Unite to End Violence Against Women campaign which seeks to increase global advocacy on all forms of violence against women and girls.

Women must be involved in resolving the armed conflicts that are affecting them, their families and their communities. They should take part in both the negotiation and the implementation of peace agreements. They should also be able to participate equally in the political decision-making process. We must actively work to increase opportunities for women to be involved in peace negotiations and processes, in recovery operations and reconciliation efforts, and in security sector reform. When women are part of informal and formal negotiation processes, the chances for a sustainable solution with full respect for human rights increase.

We should also work to raise awareness at the local and national levels of the role of women in conflict management and peacebuilding. That can be done through a systematic inclusion of gender advisers in contingents and through the training of legal and military advisers and other security personnel in how to mainstream gender equality perspectives in their activities.

We must not forget that women are often active participants in armed groups. That means that a gender-sensitive approach to designing, planning and implementing United Nations-supervised disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes is required. The situation and role of women and girls in armed groups, their training needs, including non-traditional vocational training, and their special reintegration needs should all be addressed. The needs of women associated with armed groups in various capacities, including as forced wives and child bearers, must also be considered.

The need to protect women and girls during conflict and crisis is an essential element of peace and security. That aspect has been particularly highlighted and elaborated in resolution 1820 (2008).

We have seen ample evidence of the horrendous sexual violence committed against women by armed groups, sometimes even Government forces. Combating that phenomenon is part of the mandate to protect civilians. Since the violence rarely stops once the conflict is over, those efforts should continue even after a peace agreement is reached, including ensuring women's access to justice as part of the rule of law efforts. While the United Nations has made many efforts in that area, it is most deplorable that even today peacekeepers are implicated in sexual exploitation and abuse in conflict areas. That is just not acceptable.

There is still a lack of gender balance at all levels, both in missions and in the Secretariat. More women should be appointed as special representatives of the Secretary-General and special envoys and more women should be appointed to senior positions in the

Secretariat and in missions. Special representatives of the Secretary-General and other United Nations envoys should have a clearer gender equality perspective. That is especially important in environments where women have suffered from gender-based violence. A lack of understanding of gender issues or an unwillingness to consider their importance can no longer be tolerated in such positions of responsibility. Therefore, we strongly believe that all pre-deployment training should include gender content. Resolution 1325 (2000) and issues concerning women, peace and security should be properly addressed as part of the efforts to reform the United Nations gender architecture.

One impediment to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) is the lack of budget lines for gender activities. We therefore suggest that proposals for specific mechanisms, including financing, be included in the next report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security in order to ensure full implementation of the recommendations of resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008).

In last year's open debate on resolution 1325 (2000), Sweden underlined that we all have a responsibility to provide ideas, initiatives and good practices. Let me share some of our experiences. In 2006, Sweden launched a national action plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). It stipulates that Swedish personnel contributions to peacekeeping missions should have the same proportion of female officers as the national base.

In that spirit, the Swedish police recently approached all female police officers who have more than eight years of experience with the force and informed them of the procedure to apply for a position in a peacekeeping mission. At the moment, Sweden has an all-female police contingent in Timor-Leste. Furthermore, Sweden has nominated the first female deputy police adviser ever in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Next year, Sweden will have just as many female as male students at the national police academy. As a result of those active efforts, Sweden has achieved the same proportion of female police officers working overseas in peacekeeping missions as we have nationally.

In the military forces, special observer teams that form part of our contribution to the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan, there will be equal participation of female and male officers. For the past couple of years, Sweden has argued for a new capacity in peacekeeping missions. We believe that civilian observers would be an important complement to the capabilities we already have. In particular, civilian observers could be an even more relevant tool in dealing with violence against women and girls.

Sweden is now in the process of reviewing our national action plan on resolution 1325 (2000). It was developed through a consultative process, including public authorities and civil society organizations. It has helped put the issues of women in armed conflict high on the agenda and made everybody aware of the importance of including more women in Swedish contributions to peace missions. We wholeheartedly recommend that fellow Member States which have not yet done so elaborate national action plans of their own for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Uganda.

Mr. Butagira (Uganda): I thank you, Sir, for organizing this important debate. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Ms. Rachel Mayanja, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women; Mr. Alain Le Roy, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations; and Ms. Inés Alberdi, Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women, for the commendable work that they are doing.

I wish to reiterate Uganda's commitment to the implementation of resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008). We take note of the report of the Secretary-General (S/2008/622) and would like to highlight what Uganda has done.

Women's participation in Uganda's political life goes beyond elective office and has extended to other spheres, including peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts, as stipulated in resolution 1325 (2000). Uganda has a very advanced, articulate and organized women's peace movement. Even before the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), my Government had previously supported the efforts of such women leaders as Ms. Betty Bigombe, who initially headed the peace talks from 1994 to 2004 with the Lord's Resistance Army to end the conflict in the northern part of Uganda.

The Ugandan Government has also made some provisions for women's participation in the ongoing

peace talks in Juba. In addition to the two women directly on the peace team, Uganda has facilitated women's attendance at meetings. The Ugandan Government's efforts have been backed by civil society organization initiatives, such as the Civil Society Women's Peace Coalition, which has played an instrumental role in bringing women's voices and issues to the table through its peace campaigns and capacity-building programmes for women leaders and organizations at the community level. Those activities are in recognition of women's crucial role in sustaining the community during conflict and in rebuilding society thereafter.

The Ugandan Government, in collaboration with its development partners, is currently working on different recovery programmes to resettle and rehabilitate displaced communities in conflict-affected regions. Special provisions are being made for the most vulnerable groups that include women under the National Peace Recovery and Development Plan for northern Uganda. The national machinery has initiated the process of integrating the gender perspective into that document so as to ensure that women equally enjoy the opportunities and benefit from the planned interventions.

Ugandan women are engaged in peacekeeping missions. There are currently 16 women police officers serving in peacekeeping missions in Liberia, the Sudan and Timor-Leste, and also under the African Union Mission in Somalia.

Redress for victims of human rights violations is being addressed. Besides the usual judicial system, there are proposals to include the use of traditional justice systems, such as mato oput in northern Uganda, to resolve and settle grievances without condoning impunity.

None of those achievements has been made without some challenges. One of the Government's major hurdles is that women's participation includes a limited understanding of resolution 1325 (2000) at all levels. More workshops and seminars to sensitize women are crucial. Some of the challenges are being addressed by civil society organization-led initiatives that have facilitated skills training for women leaders, cross-learning visits and consultative meetings at the community level in a bid to put resolution 1325 (2000) into practice.

In that regard, the Ugandan Government welcomes the support and cooperation exhibited by the United Nations and the international community for Uganda's efforts at implementing the resolution, in particular the two-year programme entitled "Supporting Women's Engagement in Peacebuilding and Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict: Community-led Approaches" launched by the United Nations Development Fund for Women in Uganda in 2007 with the support of the United Kingdom's Department for International Development.

That programme has focused on supporting women's access to justice and their participation in peacebuilding processes. It places special emphasis on Gulu, Kitgum and Lira Districts by supporting women's engagement in the Juba peace process and by working with the Department of Political Affairs to provide a gender adviser to the United Nations special envoy, as well as by working to ensure that women's priorities are addressed in the peace process. The programme has also supported the launch of a campaign to increase the presence of women in northern Uganda's police force to a minimum of 30 per cent.

At the policy level, the Uganda Women's Parliamentary Association has undertaken the gender sensitization of fellow parliamentarians on two important bills: the Domestic Relations bill and the Domestic Violence bill, which are under discussions by competent organs in Uganda. The programme will also work with local government institutions to adopt gender-responsive by-laws in the aforementioned priority districts.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate Uganda's commitment to continue building capacity to implement resolution 1325 (2000).

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The next speaker is the representative of Chile, on whom I call.

Mr. Muñoz (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): Chile wishes to thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this important meeting on women, peace and security. We also thank the representatives of the Secretariat and of civil society for their important interventions on women in conflict and post-conflict situations. We are grateful to delegations for their patience in listening to interventions at this late hour.

Chile fully supports the statement made by the delegation of Ireland on behalf of the member countries of the Human Security Network.

This year, eight years after the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), the Council adopted resolution 1820 (2008), which reveals that atrocities against women in armed conflicts are continuing. That situation is unacceptable at this stage of the twenty-first century, and we must put a stop to it immediately.

We welcome the Secretary-General's report on the item (S/2008/622). While noting some progress towards implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), it also points out that the situation of women in conflict and post-conflict situations has not improved. In that regard, and as the Chairman of the Human Security Network has pointed out, the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) is not the exclusive concern of Security Council or the United Nations system but is a concern of the international community as a whole.

In that context, the creation and implementation of a national action plan is crucial. Chile has started work on such a plan, which at this initial stage reflects the priority assigned by the Government of Chile to the cross-cutting application of the focus on gender mainstreaming in government policies.

Last March, a working group was created, consisting of representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defence, the National Women's Service and civil society, and was tasked with submitting in March 2009, on International Women's Day, a final draft of a national action plan that meets the requirements of resolution 1325 (2000). On Thursday, 23 October this year, a first draft of the plan was presented to the public sector and to civil society to allow an open and participatory discussion leading to a final draft that will be a faithful reflection of the interests of our society.

As recommended by the Secretary-General in his report, the draft action plan is a comprehensive design for the best possible involvement of bodies concerned with the prevention of conflict and the management and solution of existing conflicts, with comprehensive inclusion of the gender perspective. There are several primary action lines in the national action plan submitted for discussion.

First, a gender approach is to be applied in the respect for and promotion of human rights, both in Chile and beyond our frontiers. Secondly, the equitable participation of women in peacekeeping operations and in the relevant decision-making bodies must be promoted. Thirdly, we must mainstream a gender perspective in its broadest sense in the design, implementation and execution of our international cooperation policies. The fourth action line is to enhance the technical capacity of both government officials and civil society in relation to gender perspective, security and conflict. Fifthly, implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) must be promoted in the region, through the exchange of experiences and international cooperation both on a bilateral basis and in regional mechanisms for peacekeeping operations in which Chile is involved, particularly in the context of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti.

With the adoption of a national action plan in the context of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), Chile will be following one of the fundamental principles of our foreign policy, which is promotion of the fundamental rights of the human person at the universal level, including gender perspective in its widest sense, which should be a central element of a modern people-oriented foreign policy.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Norway.

Ms. Juul (Norway): Eight years have passed since the Security Council adopted resolution 1325 (2000) — eight years in which we have seen a growing awareness in the Council of the need to include women in peace processes and peacebuilding efforts. This is a step in the right direction. But we are still far from a full implementation, and numerous challenges remain.

Women's perspectives are still neglected in peace negotiations. Women's particular concerns and needs are overlooked or relegated to the bottom of the list of priorities. Women and girls continue to be targets and victims of injustice, assaults and sexual violence in armed conflicts and in post-conflict situations. And the issue of impunity for atrocities committed against women and children remains largely unresolved.

Allegations of sexual misconduct by United Nations peacekeepers are still heard despite the Secretary-General's declared zero-tolerance policy. That shameful situation must end. It is clear that the zero-tolerance policy needs to be strengthened. It is time to establish better internal controls, develop more

effective prevention measures and improve the investigation and prosecution capacity.

Norway will once again encourage the Council to take action on the Secretary-General's recommendation on developing a monitoring mechanism to prevent and redress violence against women in armed conflict. That will also require efforts to improve United Nations internal auditing in this area, as well as efforts to ensure that troop-contributing countries commit to prosecuting offenders. A recent Wilton Park conference took a closer look at existing efforts to prevent the targeting of women and children for sexual violence and found that military peacekeepers need a clear doctrine and guidelines for action for protecting women and girls. Strengthening and clarifying peacekeeping mandates with regard to sexual violence must be given even higher priority both within the United Nations system and at the national level.

Violence against civilians during and after armed conflict, especially against women and children, makes reconciliation, durable peace and development much more difficult. Sexual violence against women and girls as a method of warfare is extremely destructive for the victims and for society as a whole.

The adoption in June of resolution 1820 (2008) on women, peace and security and sexual violence in situations of armed conflict was an important step. By stressing that "sexual violence, when used ... as a tactic of war in order to deliberately target civilians ... can significantly exacerbate situations of armed conflict and may impede the restoration of international peace" (*resolution 1820 (2008), para. 1*), the Council showed the world that it recognizes sexual violence as a security problem that requires a systematic security response. We are looking forward to the Secretary-General's report on that issue in June 2009.

Norway strongly supports the united effort of 12 United Nations entities in creating the United Nations Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict initiative, which will seek to improve coordination and accountability, support national efforts to prevent sexual violence and respond effectively to the needs of survivors.

The lack of security within and outside of refugee camps is a major problem. Refugee and displaced women and girls are particularly vulnerable to sexual assault and sexual violence because of the conditions of dependency that are often created in camps. The distribution of food, the need to fetch water and fuel outside the camp area and poor sanitary conditions are all important factors. Thus, in our humanitarian efforts, Norway aims to ensure that women and men alike take part in all levels of the planning, organization and general management of refugee camps. Women must be systematically registered and treated as individuals rather than solely as members of a man's family, and camps should be organized so that single women and single men are housed in separate areas.

The main responsibility for implementing resolution 1325 (2000) remains with individual Member States. The development of national action plans is a good way of initiating strategic actions, identifying priorities and resources, and determining responsibilities and time frames for monitoring implementation efforts. Norway adopted a national action plan in 2006 that has proven to be an efficient tool in the process of implementing the resolution. We are pleased to note that the action plan has inspired similar processes among our partners and we are particularly encouraged to see women taking their rightful place in the peace processes in the Sudan and Nepal. We look forward to continuing to work with all Council members and other partners to ensure the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and women's equal participation in peacebuilding.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Colombia.

Ms. Blum (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your work as President of the Security Council for the month of October. We appreciate your delegation's initiative in convening this open debate on the occasion of the eighth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) on the topic of women and peace and security. We also thank you for the concept paper circulated in the past few days, which provides guidance for the discussion.

Colombia, as a friend of resolution 1325 (2000), has worked to promote and implement the mandates contained in the resolution, in particular on the commitment of States. As is pointed out in the concept paper, resolution 1325 (2000) has become a guide for national efforts to attain gender equity in peacebuilding. In my country's case, the mandates contained in the resolution have been incorporated into different policies, plans and programmes that promote

peace, security and gender equity, particularly through our national development plan for 2006-2010.

I wish briefly to share three initiatives under way in my country in that respect. They illustrate how, from a national perspective, it is possible to establish practices that broaden and strengthen the role of women in peacebuilding. The first consideration refers to the need to make that participation a reality through a long-term programmatic approach fully mainstreamed in national policies. My country's experience in drawing up the national human rights and international humanitarian law action plan is based on that approach.

The Colombian State, represented by 27 entities that worked a year and a half on the agreement of the plan, took the inclusion of the gender perspective as one of its central criteria in all the thematic axes under consideration. As a result, the main problems faced by women were identified and strategies and action lines created, aimed at girls, teenagers, adults and elderly adults in various areas, such as education, work and family. Moreover, emphasis has been placed on the situation that women face as a consequence of the violence generated by illegal armed groups and on the actions that the State must take to guarantee and redress their rights.

Thus, measures have been taken to ensure that the gender perspective is incorporated into actions in the area of human rights and international humanitarian law from their very outset, rather than in reaction to certain developments. It is important to highlight that the national human rights and international humanitarian law action plan is a State policy covering a 15-year period.

The second consideration relates to the establishment of spaces in which women's contributions can have an impact on Government decision-making. Women's community councils have been in Colombia to that end. The councils provide a space for women's dialogue at the provincial and municipal levels. In that context, the "Women Building Peace and Development" policy has been established, and its implementation is moving forward satisfactorily.

The members of the councils are women leaders who represent diverse organizations and communities. Their purpose is to enhance the civic participation of women with a view not only to channelling the projects and requests that women present to their local communities, but also to establishing networks of women's social organizations to combat violence and promote gender equity. The councils monitor and exercise social control over State policies for women and act in coordination with the office of the presidential adviser for women's equality, which enables adequate follow-up of the actions taken and achievements obtained.

Lastly, I wish to highlight the national experience achieved through the so-called laboratories of peace. That initiative has promoted reconciliation practices that deactivate the causes of violence at the regional level. In the development of the initiative, which originated in the programme support for the peace process in Colombia agreed with the European Union, the role and participation of women have become fundamental.

The broad movement of civil participation in favour of peace has become a genuine social laboratory in which, by using rule of law instruments, we are exploring the routes that Colombian society and local communities must take to end violence and favour sustainable development. Such approaches have also been translated into peace and development initiatives led by local and regional women's, youth, Afro-Colombian and indigenous organizations. Moreover, they have enabled us to identify lessons learned and innovative methodologies that can provide input for the building of a public policy favourable to development and peace.

The anticipated result for women, youth, indigenous and Afro-Colombian groups is an increase in their capacity to participate and influence the policies, spaces and processes that contribute to the strengthening of democratic institutions, peacebuilding and the promotion of coexistence.

My delegation would like to highlight the important role of the United Nations in promoting the participation of women in the achievement of peace and security. In our experience, the fundamental element in the development of national initiatives has been the acknowledgement of diversity as the basis of democracy and the contribution of women in the construction of peace, security and development. We encourage the United Nations to maintain and deepen that approach.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Finland.

Ms. Lintonen (Finland): We welcome this yearly stocktaking meeting of the Security Council on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). We also welcome the fact that the Council has, to an increasing extent, included a gender approach in its work to maintain international peace and security. That approach should be integrated into all United Nations activities.

The response to conflict is more effective and the ground is better prepared for sustainable peace and security when women and men alike are involved. Women's experiences of war provide them with a knowledge base that has to be utilized by engaging with women and by involving them in conflict prevention, crisis management, peacebuilding and reconstruction. Women serving in peace operations can more easily reach out to local women. The participation of women in peacekeeping operations can further serve as a positive example for the local population and contribute to building confidence between the mission and the local community.

It is important that all those involved in operations be sensitized to gender issues and understand the gender dimensions of conflicts. That can also ensure responses that are more appropriate to the needs of the local population as a whole and contribute to the effectiveness of the operation. Therefore, resolution 1325 (2000) is an issue not only for women, but equally for men.

There has been progress in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). We have to admit, however, that a lot of work still needs to be done. During the debate on resolution 1820 (2008), one Member State put it rather bluntly by saying that it was not self-evident that in all States there was the necessary political will to implement resolution 1325 (2000). That political will is needed in order to change deep-seated traditions that discriminate against women. We must also remain firm in the fight against impunity. Amnesties encompassing rape or sexual and gender-based violence are simply not acceptable. We must remain determined to do all we can to overcome those challenges in an open and cooperative spirit.

We will need that political will as actors of the international community, too. In that respect, the United Nations system can have a major role to play in ensuring that women's wider involvement in peace processes, crisis prevention, management and post-conflict operations becomes standard practice. In that regard, the first step is to ensure that resolution 1325 (2000) is fully incorporated into the mandates of peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations, as well as those of special representatives and special envoys. Consequently, Member States would hold the special representatives accountable for the implementation of the elements of resolution 1325 (2000) of their mandate at the time of their reporting to the Council by asking what has been done to include women in the peacebuilding processes that they have led.

We need to join forces and to work at different levels. We need to start our work at home and consider what we can do to get more women involved and to have a gender perspective integrated into conflict prevention, crisis management and peace building. A national action plan on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) could be a way forward in that field.

Finland adopted its national action plan in September. The national action plan serves as a useful reminder of what we could be doing better. For example, Finland is focusing more attention on gender equality in recruitment for civilian and military crisis management. We are striving to have more women involved in crisis management and pledge to support female candidates for operational leadership positions.

To conclude, I would like to stress that the guiding principle in the national action plan is that women should be seen not as victims, but as agents of capacity and, often, as a driving force, for building global security. Let us all be guided in our work by the wise words spoken by the Secretary-General during the Council discussion on resolution 1820 (2008) in June:

> "By creating a culture that punishes violence and elevates women to their rightful role, we can lay the foundation for lasting stability, where women are not victims of violence but agents of peace." (*S/PV.5916, p. 5*)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Myanmar.

Mr. Lwin (Myanmar): I would like to express our appreciation to you, Sir, for organizing this important debate on women and peace and security. I also thank

you for giving me the floor to take part in this open debate.

I wish to thank the Chinese delegation for its very useful concept paper (S/2008/655), which focuses on women's equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security.

We live in a changing world in which States Members of the United Nations increasingly recognize that achieving durable peace requires the full involvement and equal participation of women in conflict resolution and subsequent peacebuilding. Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), adopted eight years ago, and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995, underscore the convention that peace is inextricably linked with the equality of women and men.

In situations of armed conflict, women and girls are among the most vulnerable. Even after the war has ended, the deteriorating economic situation heightens women's vulnerability to being trafficked. Women are also likely to experience discrimination and domestic violence on their return to their village or town of origin. In those circumstances, we must act together to redress the situation and ensure that there is zero tolerance with regard to violence against women and girls.

Myanmar fully supports a zero-tolerance policy. Throughout our history, women have always enjoyed a special place in the family and society. Our traditions, culture and values reflect our efforts to promote gender equality. Successive Governments have also endeavoured to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, including sexual exploitation and abuses. The Myanmar National Committee for Women's Affairs was established in 1996 to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Subsequently, the Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation was formed in 2003 to protect women from discrimination and to ensure their full enjoyment of their rights.

Myanmar shares the view that the best way to protect civilians, particularly women and children, in armed conflict is to prevent such conflicts. My country has experienced first-hand the devastating effect of insurgency. Only recently, owing to the national reconciliation policy of my Government, we have emerged from under the dark clouds of conflict. The insurgency that has ravaged the country for four decades is virtually over, as 17 out of 18 major insurgent groups have come back into the legal fold. Today, only remnants of the last insurgent group and narcotrafficking armed groups remain as outlaws. Peace and stability now prevail in almost all corners of Myanmar. It has resulted in significant improvement in the daily life of civilians, in particular women and children.

My delegation joins the international community in its condemnation of sexual assault and other forms of violence committed against civilians in armed conflict, particularly women and girls. We must work together to prevent that.

The combined efforts of our countries, the United Nations system and civil society over the past eight years have contributed to changing, to some extent, the lot of women in many conflict and post-conflict situations. Political will and resources will be needed to turn the small gains achieved into significant steps.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Rwanda.

Mr. Nsengimana (Rwanda): My delegation welcomes this opportunity to participate in this open debate on women and peace and security, and wishes to express our appreciation to the delegation of the People's Republic of China for convening it. We also thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2008/622) on women and peace and security, which offers an assessment of the state of implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and the challenges that remain.

I also would like to thank the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General, Ms. Rachel Mayanja; Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Alain Le Roy; the Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), Ms. Inés Alberdi; and Ms. Sarah Taylor, Coordinator of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, for their fruitful and comprehensive interventions on the present situation of women regarding peace and security.

The genocide in Rwanda in 1994 witnessed some of the most inhumane acts of violence targeted at women and girls and the use of sexual violence as a tactic of genocide. The survivors of the genocide continue to live with the consequences of those crimes

almost 15 years later. The perpetrators of these heinous crimes, the ex-forces armées rwandaises and interahamwe, now the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR), have been a main cause of regional insecurity in the Great Lakes region since 1994 and continue to be a major factor in the current situation in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. The FDLR continues to commit war crimes, crimes against humanity and numerous other human rights violations in the Great Lakes region.

Many regional and international agreements and instruments provide commendable mechanisms to deal with the threat posed by FDLR, but little or no attempt has been made to translate them into action. It is imperative that those agreements be put into action promptly to enable a lasting solution to the problem, which further threatens women in the Great Lakes region.

The equal participation of women in the promotion of peace and security in both conflict and post-conflict situations is integral to any peacekeeping, peacemaking or peacebuilding process. It is in that context that my Government has set out to ensure that women are central to the political, economic and social governance of our nation. Women today hold 56 per cent of seats in Parliament; head the Foreign, Information and Education Ministries, among others; head the police force and participate in peacekeeping missions; and hold command positions in the armed forces.

The participation of women in the maintenance and promotion of peace can begin to manifest itself only through sheer political will. The Government of Rwanda has made it abundantly clear that governance without the participation of more than of half the population is not governance.

Rwanda is a major troop-contributing country to United Nations peacekeeping operations and has a vested interest in preventing sexual violence in situations of armed conflict. Therefore, the Rwanda Defence Forces (RDF) considers gender-based violence and violence against women to be main components of the security threat. In that respect, the gender desk at Rwanda Defence Headquarters devises training programmes with the support of UNIFEM to raise awareness of gender-based violence and violence against women in the armed forces.

Awareness of and training in how to respond to gender-based violence and violence against women has now been mainstreamed into the curriculum of all of Rwanda's military schools and training institutions and is integral to the preparation of all RDF battalions preparing for peacekeeping missions abroad. The participation of Rwandan policewomen in peacekeeping missions in the Sudan has further ensured that they raise awareness among the population in support of their missions.

We welcome the Secretary-General's report calling for an increase in resources and support to Governments in conflict or post-conflict situations to ensure the increased participation of women in the maintenance and promotion of peace. We also look forward to the establishment of a strengthened and consolidated United Nations gender entity.

My Government therefore reiterates its support for the continued implementation of Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008) and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa and will remain a strong advocate for the participation of women in all aspects of governance.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Denmark.

Mr. Staur (Denmark): Allow me first of all to express my appreciation for the very constructive concept paper (S/2008/655) presented for this open debate of the Security Council. It is very important that the Security Council focus on women's equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, which of course is the main thrust of resolution 1325 (2000).

The latest report (S/2008/622) of the Secretary-General states that progress has been made in incorporating gender perspectives in national policies, raising awareness, developing programmatic tools and enhancing women's participation in conflict prevention, peace processes, peacebuilding, peacekeeping operations, security sector reforms and in combating sexual violence.

That progress is positive, but the Secretary-General's report also confirms existing institutional and organizational gaps and challenges in the implementation of the resolution. In the report, a

specific assessment is made of the protection of women, in particular against sexual and gender-based violence, and the report notes that despite efforts by the United Nations, violence against women persists and there is an urgent need for increased efforts to prosecute perpetrators.

The report also refers to the June open debate at the ministerial level on women and peace and security, which focused on sexual violence in situations of armed conflict. The Council unanimously adopted resolution 1820 (2008), stressing that sexual violence as a tactic of war can significantly exacerbate situations of armed conflict. It demands that all parties immediately protect civilians from all forms of sexual violence and affirms the Council's intention to consider targeted sanctions against perpetrators.

Denmark was a sponsor of that resolution. Women and girls are especially vulnerable to sexual abuse during violent conflict and post-conflict situations. The use of often systematic gender-based violence as a strategy of war, impunity for perpetrators and the absence of gender justice are challenges that urgently need to be addressed.

So far, we have experienced had limited international focus on the protection of women as victims and even less focus on their right to participate and on their potential resources, all of which should be at the centre of our attention. We need to change that.

The potential contributions of women in conflict prevention, conflict resolution, peacebuilding and reconstruction in post-conflict situations can hardly be overestimated. Implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) is thus of the utmost importance. It has now been eight years since the Council called for women's participation and full involvement in all efforts to maintain and promote peace and security. Since then, the Security Council has often reiterated the need for the United Nations system, Member States and all other relevant actors to promote equal participation.

At the end of the day, it is the results that count. So, where are we now, eight years later? Have we really increased the participation of women in conflict resolution and in peacebuilding? The short answer is that we do not really know. Satisfactory data are still missing. What we do know, however, is that we are still facing a vital challenge.

Denmark was one of the very first countries to formulate a national action plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). That plan has now been revised, in an all-of-government approach and with the comprehensive cooperation of all walks of the Danish society. The first objective of the plan is to achieve greater active participation of women in peacebuilding at the international and local levels.

We strongly believe — and various studies support this idea — that sustainable peace demands the active involvement of women at all levels. It is certain that national plans for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) will contribute to the crafting of improved solutions to the challenges we face.

In conclusion, I would like to stress that we all have an obligation — all of us — to move much faster to promote and safeguard the right of women to participate in shaping actions towards equitable peace. Denmark looks forward to continued cooperation with all members of the Council to fulfil that obligation.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations.

Mrs. Ratsifandrihamanana (*spoke in French*): Woman, by her very essence, is the source of life and thus a source of peace. Woman, by her very nature, is made of compassion, humanity and sensitivity. She labours for peace. She gives birth in great pain, and she deserves peace.

By providing us with a platform for discussion on a topic that is close to the hearts of the African Union, you, Mr. President, enjoy our full appreciation and support. We are also grateful to all the other members of the Council and all those who have defended peace and security for women, by women and with women. I pay special tribute to the very valuable contributions of my two sisters present here — Rachel Mayanja and Inés Alberdi.

With respect to peace and security for women, in Africa, women are the first victims of war, conflict, violence, rape, forced marriage, slavery and human trafficking. The African Union is not indifferent and has developed a significant number of political and legal instruments on the protection and empowerment of women. These efforts today benefit from improved coordination for their effective implementation. The African Union, inter alia, has been developing a project

on the rehabilitation of girl soldiers since December 2007, by focusing on the specific case of the countries of the Great Lakes region.

This year, zero tolerance for cases of violence, rape, sexism and abuse of women is the African Union's watchword within the framework of its strategic policy on gender, based on respect for human dignity. Special focus is placed on sanctions against the perpetrators of such acts. Among other initiatives, a training manual was developed for African Union peacekeepers, in order to raise their awareness regarding human rights.

I turn next to peace and security by women. The African Union is striving to strengthen the role of women in peace processes, especially in countries in conflict and those emerging from conflict. It has rightly created an African Women's Committee on Peace and Development, a very active advisory structure for advocacy in the field of women's rights. It is also preparing a conference planned for 2009 on the role of women in post-conflict reconstruction and development.

With regard to peace and security with women, lasting peace and security require the man-woman tandem and the balanced contribution of all of society's stakeholders. In the African Union, the Continental Peace and Security Architecture, which has been operational since 2004, is the foundation of all actions in the field of peace and security. The current challenge lies in mainstreaming the gender component in our actions and in structures such as the Peace and Security Council, the Panel of the Wise, the Continental Early Warning System and the African Standby Force.

A memorandum of understanding between the African Union and the regional mechanisms for conflict prevention, management and resolution, concluded in January 2008, will provide, inter alia, for enhancing the coherence of actions for peace and security on the continent. The African Union also possesses a number of instruments, including the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa and the Framework for Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development, adopted in 2006, which highlights the gender aspect.

(*spoke in English*)

The African Union welcomes the report of the Secretary-General (S/2008/622). It reiterates its support for resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008) and calls for their effective implementation in Africa by mainstreaming gender in peace policies, programmes and activities. The African Union also calls for the use of internationally agreed principles, such as the Paris Principles and guidelines, as the basis for interventions in Africa, which should incorporate measures to prevent sexual abuse and discrimination against women and to promote their equal status in society.

The African Union also seeks to mobilize women leaders to participate in peacekeeping operations at all levels, in peace mediation and as special envoys. The African Union seeks to work with the relevant United Nations bodies on measures to address all forms of violence against women perpetrated in various ways, such as human trafficking, child labour, prostitution and abuse.

We have been greatly honoured by the growing contributions of women in recent peace processes in Africa, such as those in Mozambique, Angola, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sierra Leone as well as in the ongoing efforts for lasting peace and security in the Sudan and Somalia. I should like, however, to underscore the need to strengthen the involvement of women in such processes.

Indeed, the international community's efforts on the implementation of resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008) have brought about a deeper understanding of the centrality of the gender perspective in the maintenance of international peace and security.

The specific challenges of women in armed conflict situations, sexual slavery and abuse are now well known and cannot be tolerated any longer. We must take concrete actions to ensure that the knowledge gained thus far is fully integrated into the framework of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations for the maintenance of international peace and security.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Tonga.

Mrs. 'Utoikamanu (Tonga): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Pacific small island developing States Fiji, the Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and my own country, the Kingdom of Tonga.

I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your strong leadership in convening this open debate on the theme of women and peace and security. We also welcome the Secretary-General's report on women and peace and security (S/2008/622).

The security concern of women and children in crisis and conflict situations must be addressed. The lawlessness of many of post-conflict situations put women and children in physically and psychologically vulnerable situations. Due to the increasing number of civilian combatants, the line between a soldier in the traditional sense and that of a civilian in combat is no longer as clear-cut.

The increasing engagement of civilians in violence poses an enormous threat to the security of women and children. Communities that once could be counted on for support during times of war are no longer safe, with an increasing number of their members engaging in combat. In reality, that means women and children cannot rely on the safety net they once had, and that reality is further exacerbated in post-conflict situations by the difficulty of reintegrating civilian combatants into the community. Many civilian combatants are rejected by their own communities because of the atrocities they have committed during war, regardless of whether it was by choice or was forced upon them by the army.

The community sprit is fragmented and damaged as a result, and in many cases it may seem irreparable. Feelings of hatred, resentment, fear and mistrust become real obstacles to the process of reintegration and the rebuilding of communities. The longer the process is delayed, the more women and children suffer due to the lack of leadership and the increasing lawlessness of the situation.

Thus, we would like to urge the United Nations and its Members States to work together to address the issue of women's participation in peace talks, justice processes and peacekeeping efforts. Women and children are often neglected and violated during times war and we must ensure that they are able to exercise their rights to fully participate in the rebuilding of their communities.

We would like to highlight four points in regards to strengthening the implementation of resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008).

First, the United Nations system should facilitate support to encourage women's participation in the normative and operational functions of peacekeeping. A gender perspective must be integrated into the mainstream efforts of peacekeeping to ensure that the concerns of women and children are adequately addressed.

Secondly, we support the concept of the establishment of a gender unit in the Department of Political Affairs, since the Department is instrumental in peace negotiations and manages political missions in country-specific situations. The gender unit should work closely with other gender focal points in the United Nations to provide expertise and support to the missions in the fields.

Thirdly, we encourage women's equal and substantive participation in all levels of peace and security decision-making, particularly in negotiation processes and peace talks in post-conflict situations.

Fourthly, we further encourage efforts to support the inclusion of women's issues in disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, reintegration and the resettlement of communities. Women and children have specific needs and vulnerabilities and, therefore, deserve attention.

In June this year, the Council held an open thematic debate on the theme "Women, peace and security: sexual violence in situations of armed conflict". We joined other delegations in supporting the work of the Council in that area. We have also consistently referred to the link between the security implications of climate change and the impacts the security implications may have on the physical security of women and children. We would like to reiterate that it is vital to consider the security implications of climate change and how it may affect the most vulnerable groups of our populations. Climate change is a cross-cutting issue, and it has wide implications beyond the realm of development.

We take note of the congress held in the Philippines last month, which brought much-needed attention to the link between gender, climate change and disaster risk reduction. The congress also adopted a declaration that expressed concern at the lack of awareness in many countries on those issues and the impacts it has on women.

We urge the international community to join our efforts in recognizing the security implications of climate change and the implications it has on women and children's security and well-being.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Republic of Korea.

Mr. Park In-kook (Republic of Korea): At the outset, I would like to join previous speakers in expressing our gratitude to you, Mr. President, for taking up this very important item for the open debate of the Security Council for the month of October.

The year 2000 marked an important milestone in the advancement of women's participation in the peacebuilding process with the adoption of the landmark resolution on women and peace and security. It was eight years ago that resolution 1325 (2000) was created to give a voice to countless women who would otherwise remain silent or go unheard during the international community's long journey towards peaceful prosperity. As the first to recognize the vital role that women play in the cultivation of peace and security, the resolution also highlighted the need for concrete action. Now, as we assess our progress, we are both encouraged by the achievements and compelled to address inadequacies in the resolution's implementation.

Despite clear progress, countless women continue to suffer from inequities that stem from peacebuilding procedures that have not yet benefited from the ideals of gender mainstreaming. Far too many women find themselves passively swept along by the peace process rather than being active participants in dialogue and policymaking.

Ultimately, no sustainable peace can be achieved without giving women ownership of their own security advancement. The full participation of women in field-based peacekeeping operations will contribute to considerable progress towards the goal of gender mainstreaming. The reality is that there is still a lack of women's participation throughout the peace process, from formal negotiations to field-based situations. One way to address the issue is to empower member states by providing a clear framework for the nomination protocol of women for systematic participation, including in high-level positions.

The presence of women throughout the peace process hierarchy will ensure that vital gender issues are integrated and dealt with at multiple stages of peacekeeping and security. Reaching beyond the individual Member States, women's full participation in the peace process must be actively supported by the United Nations system and built into its policymaking procedures.

As to further efforts to be made by the United Nations system, the first has to be ensuring the adequate representation of women among the highest levels of United Nations peacekeeping leadership. Their absence is felt most strongly in the crucial policymaking fields where United Nations agendas that directly affect women are formed without the full contribution of the female voice.

In that regard, we welcome the recent appointments of female senior officials by the Secretary-General in the Department of Field Support and in peacekeeping field missions, such as the Under Secretary-General for Field Support, the Special Representative for United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and the Deputy Special Representatives for UNMIL, the United Nations Mission in the Sudan, the United Nations Observer Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad. We would like to encourage the United Nations system to have more female leadership representation both at Headquarters and at the field level.

Secondly, the Security Council should devote special attention to any peacekeeping proposal in order to ensure that it does not fail to integrate women and gender components into the heart of its protocol. The Security Council may also consider the creation of a separate procedural body dedicated to the incorporation of gender components into the development of peace and security to ensure that women's participation in the peacebuilding process becomes a standardized issue.

There is also an urgent need to enhance the Department of Political Affairs through adequate human resources, which play a key role in peace negotiations and in ensuring women's engagement. Our final point on the United Nations system is the creation of a stronger gender entity that is fully equipped to be an effective mechanism supporting the implementation of resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008). We look forward to taking concrete action to that end during the current session of the General Assembly.

Our discussion is focused on full participation by women in the peace process as engaged actors.

However, we cannot help but be reminded of the tragic situation of women victims in conflict. In particular, violence against women in post-conflict situations must become a thing of the past. Sanctions should be aimed directly at perpetrators, and any tolerance of impunity should be ended. In that vein, the recent resolution 1820 (2008) should be implemented in an effective and substantive way.

My delegation would like to express its commitment to achieving concrete results in the pursuit of women's active participation in international peace and security. Ultimately, women are the engine that drives a nation's peace and security forward. It is our hope that open dialogues such as this, and subsequent concrete actions based on our deliberations, will continue to advance the crucial role of women in the peacebuilding process.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): After consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

> "The Security Council reaffirms its commitment to the full and effective implementation of resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008) on women and peace and security, and recalls the relevant statements of its President.
>
> "The Security Council takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security (S/2008/622).
>
> "The Security Council remains concerned about the underrepresentation of women at all stages of a peace process and in peacebuilding, and recognizes the need to facilitate the full and effective participation of women in these areas, given the vital role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding.
>
> "The Security Council urges Member States and international, regional and subregional organizations to take measures to increase the participation of women in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding and to strengthen the role of women as decision-makers in these areas. The Council calls upon the Secretary-General to appoint more women to pursue good offices on his behalf, particularly as Special Representatives and Special Envoys.
>
> "The Security Council strongly condemns all violations of international law committed against women and girls during and after armed conflicts, urges the complete cessation by all parties of such acts with immediate effect, and also urges Member States to bring to justice those responsible for crimes of this nature.
>
> "The Security Council requests the Secretary-General to provide a report on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) over the coming year, including information on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls in situations of which the Council is seized, on the obstacles and challenges to strengthening women's participation in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding, and recommendations to address those issues, to be submitted to the Security Council by October 2009."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2008/39.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 6.45 p.m.